

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 1. Introduction

The San Antonio Park Rangers are organized as a division of the Parks and Recreation Department, with general supervision by the Assistant Director of Operations. The division is officially named the Park Rangers and Security Division, referred to herein as the Park Ranger Division. A chief heads the division with two lieutenants as direct reports. The workforce is divided into two operating elements, River Walk and District, the latter encompassing all parks and facilities not associated with the River Walk. The District element is subdivided into ten areas that distribute Park Ranger workload across the City according to familiar boundaries such as major thoroughfares.

Both River Walk and District elements maintain three shifts for 24-hour operations, seven days a week year-round. Leading each of the six shifts is a sergeant; these six sergeants are the first-line supervisors of the organization. Seven non-supervisory corporal positions and 108 full-time, funded Park Ranger positions are authorized. Five unfunded Park Ranger positions are also authorized to take advantage of hiring opportunities in advance of anticipated losses. Four dispatcher positions and four administrative positions are authorized as support to the division. In total, the Park Ranger Division has 137 positions. All of the personnel operate from a centralized location at Hemisfair Park.

The San Antonio Park Ranger Division is the largest organization of its kind based on performance review benchmarking survey results. This report provides findings and recommendations on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Park Ranger Division, based on an extensive performance review led by the City of San Antonio Performance Analysis Team. The San Antonio Police Department played a major role in accomplishing the objectives of the review, as did several other City organizations that contributed to the recommendations in this report.

Section 2. Background

The Parks and Recreation Department director requested a performance review of the City of San Antonio Park Rangers on March 6, 2001. He cited four areas for review:

- Decentralization and distribution of resources
- Competitive compensation of employees
- Equipment and vehicles
- Naming of the Park Rangers

The director also cited planned acquisition of new parkland over the next four to five years with funding from Proposition Three of the Better Futures San Antonio Plan, approved by voters in May, 2000, and with bond issues. He expected that new

acquisitions would significantly increase—perhaps double—the Park Rangers’ area of responsibility from the 7,898-acre park inventory in effect at the end of FY 2000. Since that time, the park inventory has increased to 11,914 acres, with most of the new property acquired as undeveloped land.

The Performance Analysis Team (PAT), an organization of the City Manager’s Office, developed a work plan and began to examine Park Ranger operations on April 4, 2001. The main focus at the outset was to create and apply a manpower model of Park Ranger requirements in time for inclusion in the FY 2002 budget, with a secondary focus on compensation issues.

Among the PAT’s first actions was to develop a benchmarking survey addressing the broader issues of the performance review, which solicited responses from 55 cities, counties, state and federal agencies. Of the 55 jurisdictions surveyed, 26 responded as having a Park Ranger or comparable function. Twelve replied that the local police department performed comparable functions.

- 21 (81%) were named Park Rangers, 4 (15%) were Park Police, and 1 (4)% was named Park Patrol
 - Those using Park Rangers indicated a greater focus on resource protection and interpretive/guide duties in addition to law enforcement
 - 8 of the 21 using the Park Ranger name were armed; 13 were unarmed
- All of the Park Police were armed
- 1:9 average ratio of first-line supervisors to Park Rangers
- 129 full-time Park Rangers in San Antonio compared to 84 in Los Angeles (next largest identified by survey)

After exploring several potential data sources, the PAT built a manpower model using incident data, current and projected park acreage, and Park Ranger staff-hours as inputs. However, the model was not able to accurately predict manpower requirements for areas that currently have little or no incident history, for example, outside Loop 1604. Although a good model, the PAT concluded that without additional data it could not be used to support budget decisions.

While developing the manpower model, the PAT noted several areas that would need further review:

- Training required review and improvement
- Standardization was needed in service levels from park to park
- Park usage data was needed to project usage of newly acquired areas
- Balance was not defined between resource protection, customer service and law enforcement duties
- Ratio of Park Rangers to first-line supervisors was much higher than survey average
- Basic documents such as standard operating procedures were not available

- Communications standards between Park Rangers and dispatchers needed improvement
- Shift assignment policy hindered best use of available skills and experience

These findings were assessed to be of an operational nature. As a result, the PAT determined that appropriate expertise would be needed to evaluate these issues and make recommendations from an operational perspective. This led to a new phase of the review, during which the majority of this report's recommendations were formulated.

Section 3. Performance Review

Much of the Park Rangers' operations and training is based on requirements and guidelines of the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE), the state agency governing the process by which all peace officers in Texas are certified. Each Park Ranger had to complete at least 560 hours of TCLEOSE mandated training for peace officer certification to be eligible for employment with the City.

For the specialized expertise in law enforcement needed to address operational issues, the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) was asked to temporarily assign a police captain to lead the review. The issues to be reviewed were presented in a briefing to the City Council on September 13, 2001. Council authorized six months to complete the performance review, with a final presentation by the end of March, 2002.

The police captain was responsible to provide recommendations on improvements to:

- Efficient patrol deployment
- Standard levels of service
- Coordination with SAPD to maximize park security
- Optimal supervision structure
- Revision of Standard Operating Procedures
- Accountability System
- Leadership development
- Training
- Customer Service

The review team consisted of the following members:

- Albert Ortiz, Assistant Chief, San Antonio Police Department
- Ron Smudy, Assistant Director of Operations, Parks and Recreation Department
- Jeffrey Page, Captain, San Antonio Police Department
- Raymond Castro, Acting Chief, Park Rangers and Security Division
- Human Resources Department, Office of Management and Budget, and Performance Analysis Team resources as needed

A management group composed of the following City officials convened periodically throughout the review to provide guidance:

- J. Rolando Bono, Deputy City Manager
- Melissa Byrne Vossmer, Assistant City Manager (Community Development)
- Erik Walsh, Assistant to the City Manager (Performance Review)
- Malcolm Matthews, Director, Parks and Recreation Department
- Al Philippus, Chief, San Antonio Police Department
- Elisa Bernal, Director, Human Resources Department

Section 4. Major Recommendations

During the course of the review, the police captain and his support staff worked closely with the Acting Chief of the Park Ranger Division. The review team utilized Park Rangers throughout the review process. Roll-call briefings and several individual meetings with Park Rangers provided opportunities to share the progress of the review.

The following recommendations resulted from the findings of the performance review.

1. Efficient Patrol Deployment

- a. Divide the City into two areas of responsibility, each under the direction of a Park Ranger lieutenant: the Entertainment District encompassing the River Walk and adjoining areas, which will continue to be staffed by three shifts, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; and the Outer Parks District comprised of all other City parks, to be staffed by two 10-hour shifts, 20 hours a day, 7 days a week. SAPD will continue to assist with park security
- b. Concentrate Outer Parks District patrols predominantly on parks identified through crime analysis, citizen complaints, park usage, and similar factors to reduce criminal activity
- c. Expand patrol coverage by converting selected fixed-post assignments to mobile, foot and bicycle patrols

2. Standardization of Service Levels to Parks

- a. Institute a comprehensive methodology to determine future Park Ranger manpower requirements for annexed, new, and renovated parks and facilities, and expansion of the River Walk
- b. Analyze park crime figures to assist in determining Park Ranger patrol needs

3. Park Security Coordination with SAPD

- a. Coordinate with SAPD to continue to assist with park security on a 24-hour, 7-day a week basis, and respond to calls for service in the Outer Parks District during hours without Park Ranger coverage
- b. Transfer Park Ranger communications dispatch services from the Park Ranger Division to SAPD
- c. Clarify vehicle pursuit policy to clearly define areas of responsibility for emergency response
- d. Provide SAPD training updates and daily bulletins to Park Rangers to ensure timely information on changes in law and procedure, as well as operational techniques

4. Optimal Supervision Structure

- a. Initiate a study through the Human Resources Department to reclassify corporals to sergeants. This will potentially increase the number of authorized supervisors from 6 to 13
- b. Adjust the span of control of supervisors to Park Rangers to a level comparable to that of similar agencies, for which the average ratio is approximately 1:9

5. Revised Operating Procedures

- a. Expand and revise Standard Operating Procedures based on improvements to the Rules and Regulations and General Manual completed during this review to reflect the principal goal of helping to meet the needs of the community
- b. Continue Park Rangers' active role in the creation, revision and implementation of internal procedures as part of their commitment to continuous improvement of the Park Ranger Division, e.g., through organizational survey participation

6. Accountability

- a. Continue the recently implemented monthly activity reports to accurately reflect reporting of crime and patrol accountability
- b. Explore drug testing program options

- c. Enhance coordination between the Park Rangers and Municipal Court prosecutors
- d. Enhance coordination of training opportunities between Park Rangers, Airport Police, Code Compliance Abatement officers and others who receive similar training

7. Leadership Development

- a. Regrade the position of Park Ranger Chief based on increased qualifications, leadership and accountability to reflect the responsibilities of one of the largest Park Ranger organizations in the nation
- b. Create a Captain position to assist in community policing initiatives and deployment supervision. The new position will oversee the two lieutenants, assure deployment of personnel in accordance with crime analysis, and be involved in development and communication of policies and procedures, as well as ongoing analysis of organizational structure and relationships
- c. Revise promotion procedures to ensure fairness by refining the interview process to focus on technical qualifications, past performance, and leadership potential as the primary basis for promotion
- d. Require six week on-the-job training for all newly promoted supervisors

8. Training (including Park Ranger job applicant processing)

- a. Enhance the training unit with higher-level supervision and support
- b. Upgrade firearms training in the Park Ranger Training Academy and strictly adhere to the mandatory annual requalification
- c. Formalize requirements for non-TCLEOSE mandated training:
 - (1) Customer Service training to include Effective Human Communication, Community Policing and Problem Solving
 - (2) Resource Protection training, specifically Civil Liabilities, Risk Management, and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

- (3) Park Operations and specialized training in Parks and Recreation Department orientation, Personnel Management, Patrol Boat Operation, Environment in Parks of Significant Interest, and Parks and Recreation Department Contracts
- d. Enhance the Field Training Officer (FTO) program to improve procedures and properly document training
- e. Assign a Park Ranger to the job applicant process to conduct background investigations and enhance recruitment efforts

9. Customer Service

- a. Institute a community oriented policing and problem oriented policing philosophy
- b. Continue to build partnerships with the community in park safety and maintenance
- c. Establish a Community Operations/Resource Education (CORE) officer program, patterned after the SAPD San Antonio Fear-Free Environment (SAFFE) program
- d. Administer a customer satisfaction survey on a regular basis

10. Workforce Improvements

- a. Regrade the position of Park Ranger Chief to a range in line with comparable positions, both in nearby communities and among division managers of the Parks and Recreation Department
- b. In-lieu one Park Ranger position to create a Park Ranger Captain position
- c. Implement the second phase of the Park Ranger regrade in April, 2002; first phase occurred in October, 2001
- d. Initiate a study to reclassify seven corporal positions to sergeant
- e. Initiate a study to reclassify four dispatcher positions, three into a job classification similar to that of police service agent, and one into a training support position
- f. Transfer one Park Ranger position from patrol to applicant processing/recruiting/research and planning

- g. Transfer one sergeant position to the training unit
- h. Transfer one sergeant position and six Park Ranger positions from patrol to Community Operations/Resource Education (CORE) officer positions

11. Other Major Recommendations

- a. Change Park Ranger name to Park Police
- b. Upgrade or purchase new equipment including vehicles, laptop computers, portable radios, and video and audio equipment
- c. Continue to centralize Park Ranger operations within the downtown Hemisfair area, but consider a potential work station in anticipation of a growing park system

Section 7. Projected Implementation Costs

Detailed information on implementation costs is contained in Chapter 17, *Staffing/Budgetary Considerations*.

• Recurring Costs	FY 2002	FY 2003
• Regrades.....	\$270,508	\$372,256
• Personnel Services.....	\$ 41,718	\$168,752
• Operating Expenses.....	\$ 32,205	\$110,542
Total.....	\$344,431	\$651,550
• One-time Costs		
• Vehicles and Associated Equipment....	\$369,678	
• Laptop Computers for Vehicles.....	\$126,018	
• Radios and Associated Equipment.....	\$ 48,260	
• Name Change Expenses.....	\$ 23,053	
• General Expenses.....	\$ 46,421	
Total.....	\$613,430	
Grand Total.....	\$957,861	\$651,550

Section 8. Conclusion

While we found no national benchmark for Park Ranger organizations, the San Antonio Park Rangers have the potential to take a clear lead in such important areas as customer service, training, patrol efficiency, leadership and accountability. In the process of the review, we found many employees ready to tackle the challenges addressed here. When

fully implemented, the recommendations presented in this report will give the City of San Antonio a more professional and capable workforce, while requiring a moderate investment in additional resources.

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CHAPTER ONE

Authority of Park Rangers

Section 1. Authority

The authority of the City of San Antonio to commission Park Rangers as peace officers is found in Chapter 22, Parks and Recreation, Article II, Section. 22-36, of the San Antonio City Code. Here it is stated that the City may authorize peace officers who meet the qualifications for certification outlined in the Rules and Regulations of the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officers Standards and Education. Their status is restricted, however, by Sec. 22-37.

Section 2. May Not Be Members of the Police Department

Section 22-37 of the City Code clearly indicates that members of the Park Rangers cannot be part of the police department, stating, “Park Rangers are designated peace officers of the city, but shall not be members of the police department of the city, nor shall they be subject to the supervision of the department in the performance of their duties”. Section 22-38 places their administration under the director of the Parks and Recreation Department. However, policies, functions, areas of responsibility and operational procedures must be concurred in by the city manager, chief of police, city attorney, and director of Human Resources.

Section 3. Park Ranger Functions

Section 22-40 of the City Code outlines four primary functions of Park Rangers:

- To assist visitors and users of city parks and recreation facilities by providing information and related assistance
- To provide for the safety and security of visitors to and users of the city parks and recreation facilities and the protection of public parks and recreation property and facilities
- To assist the police department as needed
- To carry out such law enforcement responsibilities as are commensurate with their status as commissioned peace officers

Section 4. Physical Areas of Responsibility within the City

Section 22-41 of the City Code restricts the activities of Park Rangers, who “during duty hours shall be confined to city parks, streets, roads, and parking lots therein, recreation facilities operated by the Department of Parks and Recreation located on nonpark property, the River Walk, La Villita, San Jose Burial Park, old city cemeteries and such other areas as may be directed by the city manager”.

Section 5. Enforcement and Related Sections

The City Code in Sections 22-42 limits Park Ranger enforcement action to the above provisions, but does not prohibit or limit those actions that are inherently the responsibility of a certified peace officer. It further states that procedures for arrest and detention as well as other actions are to be established by the Director of Parks and Recreation and the Police Department. Finally, the code in Section 22-43 requires that Park Rangers will carry their weapons to and from work; and in Section 22-44, that off-duty employment guidelines will be established by the Director of Parks and Recreation.

Section 6. San Antonio Police Department Limitations on Park Rangers Duties

The San Antonio Police Department General Manual Procedure 614, Airport Police/Park Rangers, restricts the primary enforcement activities of the Park Rangers to designated parklands of the City, except under emergency circumstances. They are given the authority to take initial enforcement action on any violation of the law coming to their attention, but are restricted in non-emergency situations to handling offense reports up to and including Class A misdemeanors, stolen and recovered vehicle reports (not requiring an arrest), and burglary reports, (not requiring an arrest). They are also given the authority to handle non-injury private property accidents, parking violations, city ordinance violations, and violations of the Texas Transportation Code.

CHAPTER TWO

Mission of the Parks and Recreation Department

The mission of the Parks and Recreation Department is to develop and maintain a balanced, safe and easily accessible system of parks, recreational facilities and programs, as well as promote and maintain world-class facilities to further the City's prominence as a major tourist destination. Park Rangers provide a crime deterrent and contact point for the public in order to protect the property, facilities and users of this system. Additionally, they support City maintenance staff in reporting park maintenance needs and in the operation of River Walk floodgates. They also perform a vital customer service function by providing useful information about the City to citizens and visitors.

Section 1. Expectations of Park Users

Whether they live locally or out of town, patrons of our parks and facilities have certain expectations of the City's park system. First, they expect to feel safe wherever they go to enjoy leisure activities in the City. Second, they expect a high level of customer service from the Park Rangers they encounter. Park users view Park Rangers as sources of information along the River Walk, in Hemisfair Park, around the downtown area, and in City parks. This continues to be a key function of Park Rangers, making them the City's "goodwill ambassadors" in our recreation areas.

Expectations concerning levels of service vary depending on the type of park and its intended use. For example, a large urban park such as Brackenridge Park requires dedicated Park Ranger resources due to its high use and multiple venues such as playgrounds, ball fields, pavilions and concessions. An open space having minimal public facilities presents entirely different needs such as preventing vandalism or illegal dumping. Wherever they patrol, Park Rangers are the "eyes and ears" of the Parks and Recreation Department, and an integral part of the department's maintenance system through their reporting of facility conditions.

Section 2. Responsibilities of Park Rangers

Below are the specific responsibilities of the Park Rangers:

- Lead agency for park safety in all City parks and greenways, historic resource areas, natural areas, special use facilities, sports complexes, and urban spaces
 - Monitor and patrol parks and the River Walk on a systematic basis
 - Enforce park rules and regulations, city ordinances and other violations up to and including Class A misdemeanors occurring in parks
 - Make initial response to emergency calls in parks or the River Walk
 - Secure park crime scenes and investigation areas

- Maintain park crime statistics and relevant information
 - Monitor and identify crime patterns/concerns through analysis
 - Adjust patrol activities as needed to address adverse trends
- Establish/update park safety guidelines and regulations
- Provide helpful information about attractions of City parks and facilities to citizens and visitors, and encourage compliance with park regulations
- Monitor park conditions and initiate work requests for maintenance support
- Coordinate with key Parks and Recreation staff on all visitor security efforts, including park design
- Assist in recruitment, training, and coordination of civilian volunteer park watch programs
- Monitor and operate downtown flood control gates
- Monitor sound measurement along the River Walk for noise abatement purposes

CHAPTER THREE

Current Organizational Staffing

Section 1. Organizational Composition

To best understand the day-to-day operation of the Park Ranger Division, it is necessary to first understand its organizational composition prior to this review. There were 137 positions in the division for fiscal year 2001:

1 -	Chief
2 -	Lieutenants*
6 -	Sergeants
7 -	Corporals**
8 -	Support Personnel
108 -	Park Rangers
<u>5 -</u>	<u>Park Rangers (unfunded)</u>
137	

* One lieutenant assigned as acting chief

** Corporals are non-supervisory positions

Section 2. Park Ranger Assignments/Hours of Work

The Park Rangers are divided into daylight, evening and night shifts covering two districts, the River Walk and Districts throughout the City. The working hours of these shifts are 6:45 a.m.-2:45 p.m., 2:45 p.m.-10:45 p.m., and 10:45 p.m.-6:45 a.m., respectively.

On weekends from March through October, Park Rangers may be required to adjust their working hours according to the workload in high-use parks such as Brackenridge. They may be required to work the daylight shift one day, and work the evening shift the next day.

This may also occur at other times during the year depending on park usage, special events, or increases in tourism. This affects the number of officers assigned to park districts, individual posts and to a given shift. It also has an effect on Park Ranger morale since varying work hours make it difficult to plan time with their families.

Daylight Shift (6:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.) / Administrative Hours (7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

Based on positions at the time the review was initiated, the daylight shift is assigned 13 Park Rangers for the River Walk and 20 for the park districts. Two additional Park Rangers are assigned to Mission Trails and Leon Creek. Two sergeants and one corporal

are responsible for field supervision. Additional staff consists of the chief (currently vacant), two lieutenants (currently one vacant), four office assistants, two dispatchers, one operations corporal and one Park Ranger training coordinator.

Total: 49

Evening Shift (2:45 p.m. – 10:45 p.m.)

The evening shift consists of 16 Park Rangers assigned to the River Walk and 19 assigned to the parks districts. Two additional Park Rangers are assigned to Mission Trails, and one to Leon Creek. There are two sergeants, two corporals and one dispatcher.

Total: 43

Night Shift (10:45 p.m. – 6:45 a.m.)

There are 16 Park Rangers assigned to the River Walk and 19 to the park districts with two sergeants, two corporals and one dispatcher.

Total: 40

Target Team

Finally, there is a small number of Park Rangers assigned as the Target Team. This group of four Park Rangers and one corporal is responsible for operations involving public decency incidents in the parks. They work approximately 12 days a month on this assignment, with the remainder of their time spent on daylight patrol and Park Ranger public relations.

Total: 5

Section 3. Posts and Assignments

While some assignments fluctuated depending on available manpower, Park Rangers typically are assigned on all three shifts to cover the following areas daily:

City Hall (daylight only), Market Square (night shift only), Brackenridge Park, Downtown, Hemisfair, Travis Park, La Villita, River Center, and one Park Ranger river patrol boat. They are normally assigned to seven River Walk areas and six park districts. Four Park Rangers and one corporal make up the Target Team on a special assignment basis. There are also two Park Rangers (daylight and evening only) assigned to bike patrol on the Mission Trails and two on Leon Creek (one during the evening hours).

On an overtime basis, Park Rangers are used to staff Sunken Gardens, Rosedale, Mateo Camargo and Eisenhower parks, and others when special events were held at those locations.

Section 4. Public Improvement District

On July 1, 1999, the City of San Antonio entered into an agreement with the Centro San Antonio Management Corporation for management and provision of services for the Downtown Public Improvement District (PID). The agreement requires the City to maintain its existing level of services within the PID area.

While the agreement does require maintenance of “existing services”, in the opinion of the Economic Development Department, it does not bind the City to a specified number of staff-hours of work, an annual budgetary requirement, existing staffing levels or hours of operation that may be affected by changes in Park Ranger operations.

CHAPTER FOUR

Park Ranger Workload, Facilities and Equipment

Section 1. Park Ranger Calls for Service

According to statistics generated by the City of San Antonio Information Technology Services Department, in calendar year 2000 the Park Rangers responded to a total of 3,681 calls. Of that number, 2,267 or 61.6% of those calls occurred in a park, while 1,414 or 38.4% occurred outside a park boundary. Of the 2,267, 395 or 17.4% occurred on the River Walk.

Through September of 2001, Park Rangers responded to a total of 3,850 calls for service. Of that number, 2,371 or 61.6% of those calls occurred in a park, 1,479 or 38.4% occurred outside a park boundary. Of the 2,371, 371 or 15.6% occurred on the River Walk.

During 2000, the following were the top five calls received on each Park Ranger shift:

Daylight	Evening	Night
1. Miscellaneous*	1. Ordinance Violation	1. Ordinance Violation
2. Injury to Sick Person	2. Wanted Person	2. Wanted Person
3. Indecent Exposure	3. Miscellaneous*	3. Unknown**
4. Ordinance Violation	4. Drunk	4. Miscellaneous
5. Disturbance	5. Information	5. Drunk

Through September 2001, the following were the top five calls received on each shift:

Daylight	Evening	Night
1. Miscellaneous*	1. Ordinance Violations	1. Ordinance Violations
2. Indecent Exposure	2. Miscellaneous*	2. Unknown**
3. Injury to Sick Person	3. Wanted Person	3. Wanted Person
4. Disturbance	4. Disturbance	4. Miscellaneous
5. Suspicious Person	5. Suspicious Person	5. Drunk

* Miscellaneous: Call does not fall within "type of call" categories

** Unknown: Dispatcher did not obtain "type of call" information

The Park Rangers also reported the following:

- In 2000, 1,467 work orders were submitted, primarily to Park Operations for park repairs. Many of these work orders should have received a police case number because they were graffiti and/or criminal mischief related.

- In addition, 14,080 park patrol-bys were reported (a Park Ranger is required to report when patrolling certain park locations designated for more frequent observation)
- A total of 6,421 reports were written. Reports with both Park Ranger file numbers and SAPD case numbers totaled 4,251. Reports with a Park Ranger file number but no SAPD case number totaled 1,521. Of those, 649 should have been filed as criminal offenses, with an SAPD case number.
- Also, 1,122 traffic citations, 1,089 parking citations, and 1,658 misdemeanor citations were written. Unfortunately, data we found in these categories was less reliable. Municipal Court, the Information Technology Services Department, and the Park Rangers each reported different numbers. In an effort to assure accurate accounting, hand counts of these categories were conducted with the assistance of Park Rangers, and the final results were used in this report.

Section 2. San Antonio Police Department Calls for Service in Parks

According to the call for service statistics provided by the Information Technology Services Department, in calendar year 2000, the San Antonio Police Department responded to 1,149 calls for service in parks. Of that number, 8 were for the River Walk.

Through September of 2001, the SAPD has responded to 871 calls for service in parks. Of that number, 3 were for the River Walk.

Additionally, the SAPD handled 72 motor vehicle accidents in parks during 2000, and had handled 62 through September of 2001.

In 2000, the top five calls for service to the SAPD in parks were:

1. Unknown
2. Information
3. Disturbance
4. Minor Accident
5. Wanted Person

Through September 2001, the top five calls for service to the SAPD in parks were:

1. Unknown
2. Information
3. Disturbance
4. Minor Accident
5. Miscellaneous

As previously noted, according to the numbers provided by the City's Information Technology Services Department, there were 3,416 calls/reports made within City parks during 2000, (2,267 by Park Rangers, 1,149 by SAPD). It is unknown how many of the reported calls were citizen calls for service or on-sight calls generated by Park Rangers or police officers. The SAPD was involved in about one-third of the calls handled.

The SAPD Central Patrol Substation has 147 officers of all ranks assigned. They responded to 109,517 calls for service during 2000, or approximately 300 calls per day. The average SAPD officer handled approximately 745 calls for service during the year.

During the same year, the Park Ranger Division was staffed with about 120 Park Rangers of all ranks. They responded to 3,681 (2,267 in parks and 1,414 outside park) calls for service during the year, or approximately 10 calls per day. The average Park Ranger handled approximately 31 calls for service during the year. If only in-park calls were calculated, that number would be reduced to approximately 6 calls per day and the average Park Ranger would have handled only 19 calls for service during the year.

A review of the top fifteen types of calls for service received by Park Rangers during 2000 reveals that of the 2,267 reports made, over 200 of the top fifteen could have been handled by a call expediter, had one been available. A call expediter provides a more efficient way to handle calls for service by taking reports over the phone, particularly for minor property losses where no suspect or witness is available. This conserves patrol time by collecting information as soon as the initial report is made, without dispatching an officer to the scene. As outlined in Chapter 13, *Coordination of Park Security Requirements with SAPD*, the Park Ranger Division's communications dispatch function should be transferred to the SAPD. When implemented, SAPD call expediters will be available to handle Park Ranger calls for service. This would reduce the number of calls dispatched to Park Rangers per day and, therefore, the number of calls each Park Ranger would handle during the course of a year.

Section 3. Park Ranger Facilities

During August 2001, the Facilities Coordinator for the San Antonio Police Department conducted an evaluation to determine the general conditions and the efficiency of the Park Ranger headquarters building.

A. Current Conditions

The Park Rangers are currently located at 600 Hemisfair Way in a building that is 4,289 gross square feet with 3,451 usable square feet. The building serves approximately 150 employees on two floors, accessible by stairs only. No wheelchair accessibility exists for the basement. The Park Rangers have 15-30 people on duty within the building at any given time. The Ready Room is used for various functions, including roll calls, training and meetings. The men's locker room cannot be accessed without entering the Ready Room, thereby disrupting any function that might be in progress there. The building has

one men's and one women's restroom in the basement and one unisex restroom on the first floor. None of the restrooms are handicapped accessible. One shower stall is in the basement, on the far side of the building away from the locker rooms. Most areas observed were very overcrowded.

The building operates twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The Park Rangers have 24 fleet vehicles and the parking lot has 55 parking spaces, including 4 handicapped spaces. There is street access through a driveway approximately 25 feet wide. This is the only entrance to the parking area and exits onto East Durango.

B. Building Structure

The building was constructed in 1964 and appears to be in fairly good condition. The roof of the original structure has never been replaced; it has minor leaks. The exterior walls are masonry construction and interior walls are a combination of sheet rock and concrete masonry blocks.

C. Telecommunications

The infrastructure for telecommunications is substandard. The building is not on a fiber optic link. Caller ID is not available. The headquarters operation includes a dispatcher function, which receives calls from the public. Caller identification features would be useful to the dispatcher on duty. Staff has also complained about the lack of available computer terminals.

Consideration:

The building is in good shape but has been outgrown by Park Ranger operations. Several areas of concern are:

- Cramped working conditions
- Lack of American with Disabilities Act compliance
- Inadequate number of available restroom fixtures
- Poor internal adjacencies of building layout

For the immediate future, the Park Ranger building is adequate for operations since other facilities are not available. Some remodeling, repainting, and other updates to the building have been completed since the review began. A wall and a door were added to increase office space, assigned office space was adjusted, and other changes made to increase efficiency. Security alarms and cameras have been installed and are operational. An agreement has been reached to move several functions, including Training/Applicant Processing and the current Target Team to Building 533 (Richter - located one hundred yards east of the headquarters building), in order to reduce some congestion in the headquarters building.

Fiber optic installation via the Convention Center, including a new telecommunications system with caller ID, would cost approximately \$82,000. Funding for this improvement should be sought through the budget process.

While it is understood that this building will remain operational for the immediate future, lack of adequate locker space, inadequate and unsecured parking, and lack of full Americans with Disabilities Act compliance need to be addressed. Building capacity is at its limit and if manpower is eventually increased, there will not be enough office space or restrooms to handle the usage. Long term, it would be in the best interest of the City to consider moving the Park Ranger operations to a new and/or larger facility in the downtown area.

D. Decentralization

Decentralization can be achieved two ways. *Physical* decentralization disperses resources throughout a jurisdiction but resource control and policymaking remain centralized in a single authority. In contrast, *decentralized authority* empowers personnel in the field to control resources and make localized policy decisions, providing greater discretion than a delegation of authority. A popular approach that balances these two forms of decentralization is “centralized planning, decentralized execution.” In this concept, the central authority sets policy and allocates resources, but personnel are empowered within those limits to make decisions as to how best to carry out the mission.

This approach especially lends itself to a problem-solving team concept. It is important to note that in studies where community problem solving concepts were instituted, physical decentralization became less important. Therefore, our interest in decentralization is limited to preventing overcrowding of the Park Ranger headquarters building and providing enough operational flexibility to encourage a proactive mindset at all levels of the organization.

Consideration:

The headquarters building located in the downtown Hemisfair area, while in need of the identified updates and repairs, is suitable for handling the immediate needs of Park Rangers assigned to the Entertainment District. However, when we add the Outer Parks District officers to the same Hemisfair location, overcrowding results.

For that reason, consideration should be given to utilizing the Leon Vista facility as a potential Park Ranger work station. While policymaking and resource allocation would continue to be done at the Hemisfair location, Park Rangers assigned to the work station would be expected to use the savings in transit time, gained from not using the Hemisfair location, to improve their patrol and community policing operations.

Section 4. Park Ranger Equipment

A. Park Ranger Vehicles

The Park Ranger Division currently has an inventory of 24 automobiles, 25 bicycles, 4 three-wheeled motor scooters, and 4 motor boats. A breakdown of the automobiles shows:

1	1996 Chevrolet Lumina (no emergency lights/administrative vehicle)
2	1998 Ford Explorers
1	1998 Ford Taurus
3	1999 Ford Taurus
13	2000 Ford Taurus
3	2001 Ford Taurus
<u>1</u>	2001 GMC Truck
24	

The Park Ranger motor vehicle fleet appears to be adequately maintained. Replacement of vehicles is scheduled according to vehicle mileage; the division has funded the fees required for replacement of all vehicles when scheduled.

Consideration:

A review of other large Park Ranger organizations across the country revealed that there is a strong trend toward using other forms of Park Ranger transportation. These include bicycles, motorcycles, and all terrain vehicles (ATVs). The current San Antonio park inventory includes much undeveloped land that is not accessible to Park Rangers except on foot, given that their only other means of transportation is by automobile. There is a need to develop a short-term plan to incorporate alternate forms of transportation into the Park Ranger fleet so that large, undeveloped areas can be effectively patrolled.

1. Marked Vehicles Not Certified for Pursuit

During the audit of Park Ranger vehicles, it was learned that the Ford Taurus vehicles currently used in patrol by uniformed Park Rangers are not “certified” by the manufacturer for pursuit purposes. Vehicle manufacturers certify police vehicles as suitable for pursuit purposes only when they are equipped with certain features. While the Ford Taurus vehicles used by the Park Rangers are equipped with emergency lights, a siren sounding device, and distinctive markings, they are not certified by the manufacturer, Ford Motor Company, as capable of pursuit. They are manufactured and sold as “administrative” vehicles only. Upon learning of this in October 2001, a directive was issued prohibiting Park Rangers from initiating or participating in vehicle pursuits without supervisory approval or using the vehicle in emergency response code three situations (emergency lights, siren, unrestricted speed).

Consideration:

Much discussion and research has gone into the complex question of whether Park Rangers should be allowed to engage in vehicle pursuits. Fifteen cities including Phoenix, Houston, and Dallas were surveyed to determine their policies in relation to chases. The Park Ranger Division currently has 20 Ford Taurus vehicles, which have occasionally been used as pursuit vehicles. Based on the survey results, the type of vehicles driven by Park Rangers, and the current level of training, it is recommended that Park Rangers not become engaged in high-speed pursuit driving using their Ford Taurus vehicles.

While the cost of a new Ford Taurus is currently about \$14,500, upgrading these vehicles to certified pursuit vehicles would require the purchase of either the Chevrolet Impala at \$19,400 or the Ford Crown Victoria at \$19,887, less trade-in value. It will also require initial and recurring training in high performance driving. Due to the high-risk nature of their work and the liability that might accrue to the City in the event Park Rangers were unprepared to engage in pursuit when absolutely necessary, transition to certified pursuit vehicles is recommended.

However, obtaining certified pursuit vehicles does not provide *carte blanche* to pursue at will. Park Ranger vehicle pursuits, using vehicles certified for that purpose, should be rare exceptions which occur only under exigent circumstances. Exigent circumstances refers to instances where:

- a. The officer determines that immediate action is necessary; and
- b. Insufficient time exists to resort to other alternatives; and
- c. Failure to pursue may result in grave injury or death

Instances in which failure to pursue may result in grave injury or death include incidents such as officer in trouble, kidnapping or aggravated kidnapping, sexual assault or aggravated sexual assault, deadly conduct, murder or capital murder. Even in those instances, the Park Ranger will be limited to a code two response. Code two requires use of emergency lights and siren, but the vehicle can only be driven 10 miles over the speed limit up to a maximum speed of 75 miles per hour. Park Rangers will continue code two pursuit as a second vehicle when the first SAPD unit or helicopter engages in the pursuit, and will terminate pursuit as soon as a second SAPD unit is engaged.

Consideration:

With the institution of the four-day workweek described in Chapter 8, Section 3.C., there will be a need to provide additional patrol vehicles since night shift personnel will be reassigned to the existing day and evening shifts, exceeding the availability of existing vehicles. On average, one Park Ranger is on personal or annual leave during every shift, and approximately 20 percent of the current vehicle fleet is typically unavailable due to maintenance. Therefore, six additional vehicles will be needed to provide for patrol

needs and also equip first-line supervisors with vehicles so they can operate effectively in the field.

2. Standardization of Equipment

A review of ten marked Park Ranger vehicles found in the parking lot on October 13, 2001 revealed no uniformity to the installation of equipment inside the vehicles. Different kinds and placements of emergency light switches and activation devices were noted. Wires and cables that should be securely wrapped in plastic conduit were found exposed, and in one instance, to activate the emergency lights the computer had to be physically moved.

B. Bicycle Maintenance

The process for bicycle repair and maintenance is inefficient. The Park Rangers have been using a commercial bicycle repair shop in Universal City, and bicycles have to be transported to and from that location. This uses staff-hours and results in extended down-time for repairs. When this practice was questioned, the response was that there is a very limited budget for bicycle repairs and the shop's charges were very reasonable.

The San Antonio Police Department employs a full-time bicycle maintenance person. In addition, they utilize a bid system each year to buy repair parts at little above cost. Effective December 2001, Park Ranger bicycles were added to this process. It is estimated that the SAPD can provide labor for maintenance and repair services at \$15.00 per hour. A line item was recently approved for the Park Ranger budget that will assure adequate funding to support this initiative.

C. Video Surveillance of Certain Facilities

During the review, Mr. Ronald Smudy, Assistant Director of Operations, Parks and Recreation Department, requested certain sites be inspected by the San Antonio Police Department to determine the feasibility of using surveillance technology to counter theft, burglary, and possible terrorist activity. Surveillance could also record suspects on video while committing a criminal or terrorist act.

The following sites were inspected:

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| a. | San Antonio Botanical Gardens | 555 Funston Place |
| b. | Brackenridge Golf Course | 2315 Ave. B |
| c. | Brackenridge Office | 950 E. Hildebrand |
| d. | Cedar Creek Golf Course | 8250 Vista Colima |
| e. | Mission Del Lago Golf Course | 1130 Mission Grande |
| f. | Horticultural Service Nursery | 3535 Ave. B. |
| g. | Olmos Basin Golf Course | 7022 McCullough |
| h. | Riverside Golf Course | 203 McDonald |

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|------------------|
| i. | Tower of the Americas | Hemisfair Park |
| j. | Willow Springs Golf Course | 202 Coliseum Rd. |

Two recommendations, at minimal and optimal levels of capability, were given for each location. Each site would need a multiplexer (a device that allows views from multiple cameras to be recorded on one recorder), and a digital video recorder that uses a hard drive instead of tape for recording.

According to Mr. Smudy, Brackenridge Office and Horticultural Service Nursery have been subjected to repeated acts of criminal conduct and would need optimal coverage. Estimated cost is \$39,700. The cost for the other locations at minimal coverage would be \$66,400. The combined cost for all locations is \$106,100. It is recommended that the Parks and Recreation Department request funding for this equipment through the budget process.

CHAPTER FIVE

Park Classification and Crime Reporting

San Antonio's parks are unique in their location, size, and type of facilities. Each park serves a distinct demographic profile, population density, socioeconomic level and recreation demand. To help determine proper staffing and safety considerations for different parks, a classification system was established that groups similar parks into specific categories based on their common characteristics and intended use. A listing of park classifications is included in the Parks and Recreation Department system plan that describes the key features of each type of park. Each park is assigned to one of nine classifications according to its predominant characteristics. However, a park may have characteristics of one or more of the other classifications.

Section 1. Park Classifications

a. **Neighborhood Park (NP)** A neighborhood park is the basic unit of a park system and generally ranges from 3 to 10 acres. It is a recreational and social center for those living nearby and is not intended to be used for programmed activities that would attract large numbers of people, noise, parking problems, and congestion. Playgrounds are usually a high priority; normally restrooms are not provided.

b. **Community Park (CP)** A community park meets the recreational needs of several neighborhoods and may also preserve unique landscapes and open spaces. It generally ranges from 10 to 50 acres but may vary with the surrounding demographic profile, population density, resource availability, and recreation demand. It will usually accommodate group activities and recreational facilities that are not provided in neighborhood parks. Restroom facilities and off-street parking may be provided.

c. **Large Urban Park (LUP)** A large urban park supplements neighborhood and community parks, serving broader community-based recreation needs in addition to those addressed by smaller parks. It may include large areas of undeveloped land with natural vegetation and/or water features and may exceed 50 acres. Park size is based on acreage needed to accommodate desired uses as well as demographic profile, population density, available resources, natural conditions, and recreation demands. Restroom facilities and off-street parking are usually provided for facility users.

d. **Sports Complex (SC)** A sports complex consolidates athletic fields and associated facilities at large sites strategically located throughout the community. Unlike neighborhood and community parks, a sports complex is meant for citywide use. It is usually located within reasonable driving distance for target populations, and adjacent to non-residential land uses. It relieves the impact of over-use, noise, traffic congestion, and

parking on smaller parks. A sports complex typically includes a softball, soccer, or tennis complex, natatorium, golf course, athletic center building or skate-park.

e. **Natural Area (NA)** A natural area is established for the protection and stewardship of outstanding natural attributes of local, regional, and statewide significance. It may also be used in a sustainable manner for scientific research, education, aesthetic enjoyment, and appropriate public use not detrimental to its primary purpose. Minimal infrastructure is included. Its size and location are determined by the significance and availability of natural resources, and the opportunity to preserve these resources in a natural environment. A natural area is resource- rather than user-based, but some passive recreation opportunities may be available such as hiking, picnicking, and nature study.

f. **Greenway (GW)** A greenway is a linear feature that emphasizes harmony with the natural environment and allows safe, uninterrupted pedestrian movement along either natural or man-made corridors. It may follow suitable natural features such as rivers and creeks, but may also follow man-made corridors including revitalized waterways, drainage ways, utility easements, and abandoned railroad beds. A greenway is typically a minimum of 200 feet wide.

g. **Historic Resource (HR)** This is a site, structure, or building set aside to preserve and enhance its historic, cultural, and archaeological significance.

h. **Special Use Facility (SUF)** A special use facility has a broad range of single-purpose uses. Each facility is unique, and the area served is community-wide. Examples of such facilities include downtown plazas, botanical centers, amphitheaters, and cemeteries.

i. **Urban Space (US)** Urban space includes a broad range of remnant landscapes related to metropolitan area development including parkways, ornamental areas, medians, traffic islands and minor drainage ways.

Section 2. Crime in San Antonio Parks

In October 2001, the San Antonio Police Department, Information Technology Services Department, and the Park Ranger Division began working on a method of capturing information about types of crime in San Antonio parks and where that crime is occurring. This proved to be a difficult task. Many parks have multiple addresses, many crimes occurring in parks are reported at locations outside the parks, and there has been no established procedure for pinpointing locations of incidents inside the park itself. Since many parks are quite large, simply reporting the address does not allow identification of exact locations within a park. This reduces the opportunity to concentrate enforcement activities where they could have the greatest effect.

Specific reporting of crime locations will be facilitated when we institute global positioning system services. This will permit exact mapping of crimes, including those that occur in large parks, by dividing them into specific reporting areas so crime locations can be identified much the same way reporting data is captured in neighborhoods. For example, a large urban park might be divided into reporting areas centered around the community center, the playgrounds, open spaces, parking lots, etc. For reporting purposes, the address of the location would be given followed by the designated identifier. For example, 3100 Hiawatha would identify the Southside Lions Center; the identifier 12 would further indicate the large baseball diamond about one-quarter mile from the center. This information can then easily be captured and properly mapped.

Consideration must also be given to using global positioning to improve Park Ranger safety. As the review team visited larger parks, it became clear that a Park Ranger under duress would have difficulty pinpointing his location to responding officers even if he were in contact with them. If he simply activated his radio's emergency tone, officers would have no idea as to the Park Ranger's location other than the address of the park.

A review of Park Ranger activity during 2000 does not provide a clear picture of crime in San Antonio parks. Major crimes such as homicide, rape, or robbery are not handled by the Park Rangers and therefore do not appear on their list of reported crimes. Therefore, any analysis of crimes reported by the Park Rangers will need to be supplemented by information from the SAPD crime analysts. Until we are able to accurately capture reported crime in City parks from all available sources, it will remain difficult to get a clear picture of what type and amount of crime is occurring in the park system.

Criminal mischief, thefts, and damage to City property were the most reported crimes, with 562 cases reported by Park Rangers. There were 525 cases involving alcohol including City ordinance violations and other alcohol related violations; 138 other cases involved narcotics. Another 161 misdemeanor sex offenses were reported. Also, 93 cases of assault and 264 curfew violations (both park curfew and minors curfew) were reported.

While these numbers may appear high, viewed in the context of total crime in the City of San Antonio they are not disproportionate, with the notable exception of sex offenses. Reported sex offenses consist primarily of those generated by Park Rangers conducting operations involving public decency in the parks.

It is imperative that determined initiatives are taken in the future to assure more accurate reporting of crime data. The better we are able to identify trends and address them early, the safer the park system will be. If perception is reality, citizens and visitors who believe crime is a problem in City parks may choose not to use the parks based on that perception.

CHAPTER SIX

Customer Service

A basic tenet of customer service holds that to meet or exceed customer expectations, the supplier of services must first determine those expectations before trying to reach or surpass them. In the case of the Park Rangers, customer expectations are likely to vary widely depending on the needs and lifestyle of the individual. The Park Rangers serve a broad array of people, and so they must perform well in all areas of their mission. But their customer service skills are key to establishing their role of assistance to citizen and visitor alike.

Consideration:

It is essential that relations between the Park Rangers and the community be redefined to provide greater opportunity for two-way communication. This will result in community input that will find its way into Park Ranger training and operational planning. In addition to programs outlined in Chapter 8, *Efficient Patrol Deployment/Operational Changes*, administration of customer satisfaction surveys to park users should become a routine part of any Park Ranger customer service initiative.

Section 1. Citizen Park Survey

During October 2001, a survey was developed to assist in identifying and analyzing citizen perception of park safety, Park Ranger responsibilities and park needs. It was the goal of this survey to obtain information that would provide insight into the perceptions of a wide variety of park users.

To make this effort more effective, data was gathered from a cross-section of park users that typified the diverse geographic, ethnic, socioeconomic, and age differences found in the parks. All ten City Council districts were surveyed as equally as possible. In all, 300 surveys were collected, 30 from each council district, sampling every park classification available in each district.

The following indicates the questions asked and the results from each:

1. Are you a resident of the City of San Antonio?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. On average, how often do you visit San Antonio parks?
 - a. Weekly

- b. Monthly
- c. A couple of times a year
- d. I don't generally visit the parks

3. Generally speaking, when do you visit San Antonio parks?

- a. During the day
- b. During the evening / night
- c. Both day and night

4. When visiting San Antonio parks, how safe do you feel while there?

- a. Very safe
- b. Somewhat safe
- c. Neither safe nor unsafe
- d. Somewhat unsafe
- e. Very unsafe

5. Have you ever witnessed or been victim to an incident in a San Antonio park that made you feel unsafe?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Briefly describe the incident:

6. What events / incidents do you feel occur in San Antonio parks that make visitors feel unsafe?

- a. Gang activity
- b. Uncontrolled animal / pets
- c. Vandalism
- d. Use of drugs / excessive alcohol
- e. Graffiti
- f. Violence
- g. None of the above

Other/Comments:

7. Many factors are involved in making our parks safe, including how well park facilities, grounds, and equipment are maintained and presented. How would you rate:

- a. Cleanliness / Maintenance of grass and shrub areas
() Very Good () Average () Poor
- b. Cleanliness / Maintenance of play areas for children
() Very Good () Average () Poor

c. Cleanliness / Maintenance of picnic / eating areas
☐ Very Good ☐ Average ☐ Poor

d. Cleanliness / Maintenance of restrooms
☐ Very Good ☐ Average ☐ Poor

e. Park lighting
☐ Very Good ☐ Average ☐ Poor

f. Availability of posted information on safety and emergency procedures
☐ Very Good ☐ Average ☐ Poor

g. Cleanliness / Maintenance of swimming pools
☐ Very Good ☐ Average ☐ Poor

Other/Comments:

8. What do you feel are the *top three things* the City of San Antonio could do to improve park safety?
(Please circle and number)

- a. Increase the presence of Park Rangers
- b. Coordinate more organized programs, events and activities
- c. Increase involvement of neighborhood communities and business
- d. Use video cameras and emergency call boxes in park facilities
- e. Organize neighborhood / park watch programs
- f. Increase / Improve park lighting
- g. Initiate citizen volunteer patrols to assist in monitoring park activity
- h. Other

9. How would you rate the effectiveness of the current design and maintenance of the San Antonio parks as it relates to safety?
- a. Excellent / Good
 - b. Okay
 - c. Better but still needs improvement
 - d. Not very well designed or maintained

Suggestions/Comments:

10. When using the parks, how often do you see a Park Ranger?
- a. Almost every time
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Not very often
 - d. Never

11. The administration and management of the park system has many different aspects. One critical aspect is the personnel assigned to the parks. In order to provide a park that is family oriented, safe, clean, and customer friendly, do you feel that any of the following changes would help us accomplish this goal:
- a. Provide a manned building for information or assistance
___Yes ___No
 - b. Provide more armed and uniformed security personnel
___Yes ___No
 - c. Provide more security personnel that are not armed
___Yes ___No
 - d. Provide more guides/hosts instead of security personnel
___Yes ___No
 - e. Provide San Antonio police officers to provide security
___Yes ___No
 - f. Provide Park Rangers but change their uniform color
___Yes ___No
If so, what color do you suggest?
 - g. Provide Park Rangers but change their name
___Yes ___No
If so, what name do you suggest?
 - h. Provide more maintenance or landscaping personnel instead of security personnel
___Yes ___No
 - i. Do not change anything
___Yes ___No
 - j. Any other changes/suggestions/comments

Section 2. Citizen Park Survey Results

The 300 completed citizen park surveys present a useful snapshot of citizen perceptions of both the parks and the Park Rangers. The four major park types, Community, Neighborhood, Large Urban, and Sports, produced 79% of the survey replies, with the other park types (Natural, Historic, Special Use and Urban Space) responsible for the remaining 21%. Surveys were conducted during the daylight and evening hours.

The survey responses paint a picture of San Antonio residents who:

- Visit their parks at least monthly (72%)
- Are generally satisfied with the design of their parks, and
- Feel “somewhat” to “very” safe when visiting parks (82%)

- However, a large number are concerned or critical about specific issues including park maintenance, and safety issues such as vandalism, graffiti, and the presence of gangs

A. Park Maintenance

Maintenance of the parks appears to be an issue with many park users, particularly as it relates to park safety. Survey respondents were asked to rate various aspects of park maintenance as “very good”, “average” or “poor”. Only two-thirds of the 300 respondents expressed opinions on the maintenance topic, and many were less than enthusiastic:

- 75% of those who responded said park maintenance was “poor” to “average” while 25% said it was “very good”
- Nearly 30% of the responders felt restroom cleanliness/maintenance was “poor”, while 53% said it was “average” (25% said it was “very good”)
- Park lighting was also a concern, with 24% rating it “poor”, and 53% saying it was “average”

B. Improving Park Safety

While 82% of the survey respondents said they felt “very” to “somewhat” safe in the parks, there were various activities that made them feel “unsafe”:

- 50% (149 persons) said the presence of gangs in the parks made them feel unsafe
- 48% (144) said vandalism made them feel unsafe
- 43% (128) said the presence of graffiti made them feel unsafe
- Drug/Alcohol abuse was a concern of 39%
- Violence in the parks concerned 30%

Survey respondents made several useful suggestions and observations concerning park safety, including physical improvements and improved staffing of parks.

Physical Improvements:

- 94 respondents said that they believe the parks were not well designed or that the design needed improvement
- Respondents at 7 out of the 8 park types included in the survey rated video and emergency call boxes in parks as one of the top 3 safety improvements that should be implemented
- Respondents at 4 out of the 8 parks rated more/improved park lighting as one of the top 3 safety improvements (24% of the respondents had rated park lighting as “poor”)

Staffing Improvements:

- While 14% of those who commented said they saw Park Rangers “almost every time” they were in the parks, 46% said they saw them “never” or “not too often”
- 202 persons commented that they believed some kind of “armed/uniformed security” would improve the security of the parks
- 158 commented that the presence of SAPD would improve park security
- 106 said Park Rangers with new uniforms would improve park security
- However, a larger number—116—said the presence of unarmed security would improve park security
- 192 said information/assistance from park staff members (“manned building”) would improve the administration/management/security of the parks.

Summary and Conclusions

Based on 300 survey responses, San Antonio park users appear to be generally satisfied with their parks, but do feel the parks need improved maintenance and improved security.

Clearly, survey respondents believe that park functions could be improved by the presence of additional staff members, and appear to believe that park security would be improved by the presence of some sort of uniformed security. It is interesting to note that one-third said the presence of unarmed security would improve park security. This would make a strong argument for citizen participation as outlined in Chapter 8, *Efficient Patrol Deployment/Operational Changes*, Section 5, Use of Citizens in Community and Problem Solving Initiatives.

Ambivalence was notable in the respondents’ view of Park Rangers:

- Park Rangers were not viewed as a frequent, visible presence by 46% of park patrons who were surveyed
- When asked to rate “More Park Ranger Presence” as a “Top 3 Safety Improvement”, respondents in 7 out of 8 types of parks rated it as one of the top 3
- However, when provided with a choice of other security types, Park Rangers rated 4th behind general “Armed/Uniformed Security”, “SAPD”, and “Unarmed Security” as ways to improve park security

Other ways to improve park safety and security were also suggested, such as physical improvements (better lighting, emergency call boxes, improved cleanliness, less graffiti) and personnel (manned information buildings, more maintenance personnel, more events and activities)

Section 3. San Antonio Park Usage Surveys

The Performance Analysis Team's benchmarking survey revealed 12 of 21 Park Ranger organizations that responded consider park usage when determining staffing requirements. Survey respondents tended to employ broad estimates of park usage. But outside that group, we found that Virginia Beach, Virginia, uses a sophisticated methodology to project future park usage based on results of citizen surveys every few years.

City of San Antonio parks were measured for usage between September 10, 2001 and November 5, 2001. School safety detail officers, school crossing guard supervisors, and citizen Volunteers in Policing members including Cellular on Patrol conducted the surveys.

Survey personnel were assigned to a location for a one-hour period and were instructed to count the *number of persons entering the parks* during that time. Each of the parks surveyed was measured prior to 5 PM and/or after 5PM. Optimally, each location was to have been surveyed twice during each period. For the 188 locations assessed, a total of 424 surveys were obtained.

Section 4. San Antonio Park Usage Survey Results

The review team concluded that it is important for a variety of programming purposes to estimate park usage by sampling at various intervals throughout the year, e.g., quarterly. An initiative to conduct periodic park usage surveys was begun by the Parks and Recreation Department during the review. These will prove useful in developing future recommendations. For this report, the review team relied on Park Ranger experience to gauge park usage as a factor in staffing requirements.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Standard Levels of Service to Types of Parks

Perhaps the greatest challenge presented to the review team was the development of a standardized method to determine the appropriate levels of service to be provided by the Park Rangers to the parks within the City of San Antonio. A review of other park agencies across the nation including Austin, Texas, Clark County, Nevada, and the National Park Service provided no clear direction to the development of a methodology. Park Ranger agencies have typically been staffed based on *ad hoc* requests for manpower determined by experience, as the City of San Antonio has done over the years.

The Performance Analysis Team initially developed a manpower model from the City's annexation model, which had been used successfully in similar applications. Due to limitations in available data, the model was not able to accurately predict manpower requirements for areas that currently have little or no incident history, for example, outside Loop 1604. A methodology was needed that quantified workload based on the various characteristics of different parks: location, facilities, features, and clientele.

Section 1. Park Rating Survey

The first step in developing this methodology was to conduct a survey to identify those specific factors that have an impact on each park. A numerical value was placed on each park within the City using a standardized method, which would allow for a comparison of all parks collectively. Once completed, each individual park would be scored, then placed in rank order based on its score relative to all other parks in the park inventory.

During October and November, 2001, three Park Rangers were selected, one from each shift, to participate in the survey using their experience to rate each park on nineteen factors developed by the Park Ranger Division and the San Antonio Police Department. The three Park Rangers represented some 23 years of combined district patrol experience and a combined total of 58 years in law enforcement.

Nineteen questions were asked about each park and a score determined on a rating scale of 0 – 10. This created a maximum possible score of 190 points for each park.

The scoring method for each of the 19 questions is noted below.

1. Type of Park: The intended use of the park. As a general rule, parks classified as neighborhood parks were given a value of 2 to 4, community parks 5 to 7, and large urban parks 8 to 10. Sports complexes, greenways, historic resources, natural areas, special use facilities, urban spaces and tourist

areas, golf courses, and cemeteries were given a floating value (0-10) based on the unique nature of the location and its value.

2. **Park Environment:** The natural features and aesthetic value of each park. In the natural category, a score of 0-5 was possible. In the aesthetic category a separate score of 0-5 was also available.

3. **Number of Acres**

under one	...	1
One to Three	...	2
Three to Five	...	3
Five to Ten	...	4
Ten to Fifteen	...	5
Fifteen to Twenty	...	6
Twenty to Fifty	.....	7
Fifty to One Hundred	.....	8
One Hundred or More	.....	10

4. **Type of Facilities:** Awarded one point for each feature found in the park, for a maximum possible score of 10 points. Features included picnic tables, play equipment, restrooms, basketball/tennis courts, pavilions, pro shops/restaurants, ball fields, community centers, walking trails, concession areas, and other facilities.

5. **Type of Patrol Required:** The scoring in this section denoted the different types of patrol required to properly check a particular area, i.e. single or two person patrol, automobile only, walking only, combination walking/driving, and bicycle. Up to 10 points were awarded based on the combinations needed.

6. **Hours open to the Public:**

Daylight Only	.....	4
Daylight/Evening	.....	7
Twenty Four Hours	.....	9
Gates Operated	.....	1 additional pt
Not open to Public	.....	1

7. **Number of Times Per Day Patrol Required per Shift:**

None	.....	1
Once	.....	6
More than Once	.....	10

8. **Distance From Downtown Park Ranger Station:**

0 to 1 mile	.....	2
2 to 5 miles	.....	5
6 to 9 miles	.....	7
10 or more miles	.....	10

9. Estimated Use: Daylight Shift:

Under 100.....	2
100-200.....	4
200-500.....	6
500-1000.....	8
1000+.....	10

10. Estimated Use: Evening Shift (Same as above)

11. Estimated Use: Night Shift (Same as above)

12. Type of crime common to park/coverage area: total maximum score of 10 points, with two points assigned to all categories of misdemeanor ordinance violations. One point assigned for categories of criminal mischief, abandoned vehicles, drunk/disorderly conduct, indecent exposure/sex offenses, assaults, burglary/burglary vehicle/theft, non-violent felonies, and violent felonies

13. Based on estimated Number of Reported Crimes each Month.

Non- Violent Misdemeanor cases per month:

0 to 10.....	3
11 to 25.....	5
26 to 50.....	7
Over 51.....	10

14. Violent Misdemeanor cases per month: (Same as above)

15. Non-Violent Felony cases per month: (Same as above)

16. Violent Felony cases per month: (Same as above)

17. Estimated amount of time to patrol through/around location:

Not applicable.....	1
Under 15 minutes.....	3
16 to 30 minutes.....	5
31 to 45 minutes.....	7
46 to 60 minutes.....	9
61 or more.....	10

18. Does the park require special coverage during certain times of the year.

No special coverage.....	1
Single special event coverage.....	3
Multiple special event coverage.....	5

Seasonal special event coverage.....	8
Consistent special event coverage....	10

19. Other considerations: Two points scored for each special consideration, as reflected in scoring on question 18, for a maximum of 10 points.

Section 2. Determining Standardization of Service Levels

Two conclusions were drawn in the second step of the process.

First, in the *Conclusion* at the end of this report, the review team notes that the Park Ranger Division had done a good job based on three indicators:

1. People feel generally safe in the parks
2. While there is limited data available, there appears to be a relatively low level of crime reported in the parks
3. There are limited complaints by the general public about the condition and maintenance of the parks

From these findings based on experience, citizen surveys and analysis, we have concluded that the current level of manpower within the Park Ranger Division is capable of providing a level of service acceptable to the City of San Antonio.

Secondly, the number of Park Ranger positions proposed by this review for River Walk and park patrol is 110, including five unfunded positions. Therefore, the baseline number of 110 is used in Chapter 8, *Efficient Patrol Deployment/Operational Changes*. (There are a total of 112 Park Ranger positions proposed; however, two are to be assigned to non-patrol duties).

A. Supervisory Staffing Projections

In Chapter 9 of this report, *Optimal Supervision Structure*, justification and recommendations are presented to reduce the span of supervisory control from approximately 1:19 to 1:9. If all recommendations are put into effect, there will be 13 sergeants supervising 112 Park Rangers. That would make the supervisory span of control approximately 1:8.6. As this is below the recommended span of control, no additional supervisory staff will be needed. Hereafter, for each additional 9 Park Rangers one supervisory position would be added. Outside of the recommendations made in other sections of this report, future additions to the higher management ranks would be based on recommendations by the chief of the Park Rangers.

B. Park Ranger Staffing Methodology

The next step in the process, after determining the number of supervisory positions that would be needed now and in the future, was to devise the methodology whereby additional Park Ranger manpower would be added based on defensible statistical analysis.

In order to accomplish this we added the total number of points scored for all of the City parks as described in Section 1 above. This gives us our baseline score for the park system, in order to divide that number by the recommended patrol number of 110 Park Rangers. Any park not currently listed in the Parks and Recreation inventory is *not* included in the data used for this report.

Baseline score from survey..... 10,527

Total recommended Park Rangers... 110

Total points per Park Ranger 95.7 rounded up to 100.0

The results of this calculation indicate that to maintain the existing level of service provided to the parks, one new Park Ranger would need to be added to patrol for each 100 points added to the baseline.

Next, we took each of the nine park classifications, i.e. Large Urban Park, Neighborhood Park, Community Park, etc. as classified in the Parks and Recreation inventory and defined in Chapter 5, *Park Classification and Crime Reporting*, Section 1 of this report, and listed all of the parks under their proper classification. Then the total number of park rating survey points scored for each park was recorded. The number of points in each classification was then totaled and divided by the number of parks within the classification to determine the average baseline score for each classification of park.

The following results were calculated:

		Rounded to:
Large Urban Parks.....	104.5	105
Historical Resources.....	87.2	87
Community Parks.....	85.2	85
Special Use Facilities.....	78.9	79
Sports Complex.....	78.2	78
Greenways.....	71.2	71
Neighborhood Parks.....	66.7	67
Natural Areas.....	66.1	66
Urban Space.....	57.0	57

C. Park Ranger Staffing

In Section B above, it was determined that 100 points added to the park rating survey baseline score indicates a requirement for one additional Park Ranger patrol position. We also determined the baseline score for each park classification. These numbers will now be used to determine future staffing levels.

1. Annexation/New Park Development

When new parkland is annexed or when new parks are developed within the City of San Antonio, the park rating survey should be used to determine the number of additional Park Rangers to be included in the annexation or development proposal.

It is anticipated that several new parks will be added to the park system in the near future. The Parks and Recreation Department should rate the new projected parks to determine additional staffing requirements, if any, in accordance with the above staffing methodology. Any adjustments to the staffing projections recommended in this report should be made in accordance with the methodology described above.

2. Budgeting for Park Ranger Staffing

In an effort to understand this area better, we have divided the subject by district.

a. Entertainment District

Most of the Park Ranger positions within the Entertainment District as defined in Chapter 8, *Efficient Patrol Deployment/Operational Changes*, of this report are fixed post or assignment positions. These Park Rangers are assigned to predetermined posts based on different factors than those addressed in the Outer Parks staffing methodology described above. Projected staffing for the Entertainment District will continue to be based largely on fixed post assignments. A scoring methodology similar to the park rating survey was devised for the River Walk which accounts for anticipated levels of use, types of facilities, estimated patrol frequency, flood control requirements and other factors.

For example, if the north sector of the River Walk were to be developed, the need for additional fixed post assignments would be determined based on scoring the new area to be covered using the River Walk survey designed for that purpose. If additional levels of service were required for the River Walk area, these would be identified in a budget request separately from needs determined through application of the park rating survey.

b. Outer Parks District

Outer Parks District staffing is based on park rating survey scores. For every 100 points added to the total park rating over the baseline score of 10,527, one additional Park Ranger position would be requested. If a new park is opened or new areas with existing

parks annexed, the new parks would need to be scored using the park rating survey. The score would be included under the proper park classification and divided by the new number of parks within that classification to establish a new baseline for the classification. When any number of additional Park Ranger positions required by the new parks or annexed areas is approved, it would be added to the number of existing positions and the total used as the dividing number to determine a new Outer Parks baseline score.

At a predetermined time each year or as requested by the Director of Parks and Recreation, the baseline score would be revised by updating the park survey scores based on the same criteria as outlined in the initial park rating survey. The initial survey score for each park would not change unless a condition within the park changes. For example, crime rates, park usage, added or deleted facilities, changes in park classification, all would require a change in the park rating survey score of an individual park. It is possible that some parks may gain points and others lose points during the re-survey period. The new survey results will be submitted for review and if accepted, for every 100 points gained above the initial baseline (10,527), one new Park Ranger position would be requested in the next year's budget submission.

D. Determining the Need for Additional Vehicles

In the event that additional Park Ranger patrol positions are approved in the future, a decision will be needed on whether the new positions will require vehicles. Vehicles are primarily used for patrol by the Outer Parks District shifts. It is recommended that the ratio of patrol vehicles to Outer Parks shift positions resulting from this review be maintained. If all recommendations of this review are approved, the ratio will be based on the Outer Parks evening shift, which fields the highest number of Park Rangers. With 34 Park Rangers, the evening shift will have approximately 1 vehicle to 2.75 Park Ranger positions. By contrast, the daylight shift with 25 Park Ranger positions would need to gain 9 more positions to reach the same ratio as the evening shift.

The 1:2.75 ratio excludes three vehicles for the Outer Parks District lieutenant and the five Outer Parks sergeant positions, as well as the Park Ranger chief's vehicle, one each for the captain and Entertainment District lieutenant, seven vehicles for the CORE positions, and also excludes the Park Rangers' pickup truck. Of the 29-vehicle fleet that would result from this review's upgrade and expansion recommendations, 15 will be available based on the above exclusions.

There are several other considerations that affect how many vehicles are required. A number of Park Rangers, yet to be determined by operational needs, will be assigned to bike patrol and not require vehicles. Community policing initiatives will result in some Park Rangers being assigned as a team to a single vehicle. At least one Park Ranger is on personal or annual leave, on average, during every shift based on data obtained from the Information Technology Services Department. And, an average of 20 percent of vehicles will be unavailable due to maintenance, based on current estimates. Considering these

additional factors, an average of 33 Park Rangers will have 12 vehicles available on the evening shift, thus the 1:2.75 ratio.

Therefore, if new Park Ranger positions are added to the Outer Parks evening shift above the 34 positions recommended in this report, the following vehicle allocation is recommended to maintain the desired ratio on the evening shift:

New Positions	New Patrol Vehicles
1	1
2	1
3	2
4	2
5	2
6	3

If higher numbers of evening shift positions are approved, vehicles should be provided to keep the ratio at or below 1:2.75. Adding positions to the daylight shift would not change vehicle requirements unless that shift grew to exceed 34 positions; then the above table would apply.

Consideration:

The City standardizes the location of all equipment in all marked police patrol cars whenever possible. This safety initiative should be extended to the Park Ranger marked vehicles.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Efficient Patrol Deployment / Operational Changes

Section 1. Balancing Resource Protection, Customer Service, and Law Enforcement Duties

While the duties and responsibilities of the Park Rangers are varied, their primary duties include visitor assistance, resource protection, and identification of maintenance needs, as well as law enforcement. Rather than reduce the scope of their current duties to make the Park Ranger Division more effective and efficient, we have made recommendations which will increase the flexibility of supervisors to deploy Park Rangers so they can accomplish all of their responsibilities more effectively and efficiently.

A. Armed vs. Unarmed Rangers

Much discussion has taken place as to the advantages or disadvantages of having Park Rangers whose tasks and responsibilities do not include law enforcement, and thus do not require the uniformed Park Ranger to carry a weapon. Section 6 of this chapter describes a plan to use Park Rangers as Community Operations/Resource Education Officers. These officers may be armed or unarmed. There are other examples, which can be found elsewhere, that allow Park Rangers to participate in other tasks and responsibilities. In these instances law enforcement is removed from the job description.

Another area of discussion has centered on the use of Park Rangers as a form of park naturalists. Discussions with the City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Naturalist Superintendent revealed that frequently his employees found themselves in situations where being armed would be an advantage. He listed examples of discovering poachers on city property, trespassers, drunks, four-wheelers destroying property, etc., in all cases being in wooded areas far away from help or assistance. He is an advocate of Park Rangers being armed.

The primary rationale for armed versus unarmed has often centered on cost savings. Individuals holding the position of park naturalists would usually be degreed professionals with specialized areas of expertise. Given the salaries required to obtain this level of service, little in cost savings would be identified by using park naturalists to replace or supplement Park Rangers.

The National Park Service divides its personnel into three categories:

1. Those performing work primarily in the resource education function
2. Those performing work primarily in the resource protection and public use management function
3. A combination of position descriptions

This was done in response to many leaders and managers who felt that the service had been too focused on certain aspects of park protection and law enforcement, at the expense of other equally important duties in resource knowledge, education, and protection.

If this were to be considered within the San Antonio Park Ranger Division, there would be two types of Park Rangers. One would specialize in interpretation of park resources, community problem solving and empowerment, and the significance of park resources to the public (Community Operations/Resource Education officers) and the other would have a focus on park protection, law enforcement and resource stewardship.

Both groups would still have primary duties related to customer service, but the focus on responsibilities and training would be different. As with the National Park Service, the base salary of the two groups would remain the same. The key is specialization, training, and job responsibilities, not whether they are law enforcement certified.

Section 2. Changes in Park Rangers Areas of Responsibility

A. Alamo Plaza

One Park Ranger is assigned to Alamo Plaza twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. A visible law enforcement presence is the main responsibility for the assigned Park Ranger, who also provides information to tourists and visitors. When a law enforcement response is requested in this area, SAPD officers are primarily responsible.

Consideration:

This assignment does not require continuous staffing. It is highly patrolled by the SAPD Bike Patrol Unit. On Alamo Plaza, the Alamo Rangers provide a security presence for the Alamo and the surrounding grounds 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Ambassador Amigos from Centro San Antonio are available to provide information to tourists and visitors.

A review by the administration of the SAPD Downtown Bike Patrol recommends that a permanent Park Ranger presence not be required in this area. It is recommended that during the evening hours, in addition to roving Downtown Bike Patrol, a Park Ranger will be assigned to come up from the River Walk to assure continuous patrol of this area.

B. Market Square

One Park Ranger is assigned to Market Square from 10:45 p.m. to 6:45 a.m., seven days a week. This Park Ranger serves as a visible law enforcement presence during the late evening and early morning hours. His primary responsibility is to act as a security guard for the location. When a law enforcement response is requested in this area, SAPD officers are primarily responsible.

Consideration:

While activity in this area increases substantially during the evening hours, the restaurants and bars within the location all have a private security presence. SAPD Downtown Bike Patrol and Park Rangers both patrol the location throughout the afternoon, evening and early morning hours, and with regular district patrol, provide response to calls for service.

Park Rangers' working hours continue when SAPD Downtown Bike Patrol ceases at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday and Monday, and 4:00 a.m. Tuesday through Saturday. The uniformed presence of a Park Ranger between the hours of 10:15 p.m. and 3:15 a.m. will continue to assist in assuring that the area remains clean and crime free.

C. La Villita

One Park Ranger is assigned to La Villita, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. A visible law enforcement presence is the main responsibility for the assigned Park Ranger. He also provides information to tourists and visitors. When a law enforcement response is requested in this area, SAPD officers are primarily responsible.

Consideration:

A continuous uniformed Park Ranger presence is not necessary within the La Villita area. SAPD Downtown Bike Patrol frequents the location throughout the afternoon and early morning hours, and with regular district patrol, provides response to calls for service. The gates to La Villita are locked during the nighttime hours. The decision that a Park Ranger or security guard presence is necessary during the late evening and nighttime hours is valid. Without a visible presence, tourists, visitors and business employees leaving work and walking through the area may not feel secure. It is recommended that during the evening hours, in addition to roving Downtown Bike Patrol, a Park Ranger will be assigned to come up from the River Walk to assure continuous patrol of this area.

D. River Walk

During the month of September 2001, the command staff of the SAPD Downtown Bike Patrol reviewed the Park Ranger Division's River Walk manpower assignments. The purpose of this review was to determine if some of the duties and responsibilities of the Park Rangers could be accomplished by officers assigned to the SAPD Bicycle Patrol Unit.

The most critical problem identified was that of working hours. The SAPD Bicycle Patrol Unit maintains coverage for 16 hours a day on Sunday and Monday, and 18 hours a day on Tuesday through Saturday, (daylight 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., evening 6:00 p.m.-2:00 a.m., and nights 8:00-4:00 a.m.) All night shift officers have Sunday and Monday as relief days.

This contrasts with the 45 Park Rangers who are assigned to the River Walk area and provide coverage 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Park Rangers are also responsible for the river flood control gates and monitoring of noise levels on the River Walk.

A restructuring of the SAPD Bicycle Patrol Unit's working hours and additional personnel would be necessary, at a substantial increase in cost, to provide the same coverage as currently provided by Park Rangers.

Consideration:

Park Rangers continue to patrol the River Walk and the downtown area. There is very little criminal activity on the River Walk, and it can only be assumed that this is a result of the coverage by the Park Rangers. There is no statistical methodology for determining whether their presence reduces crime.

San Antonio's River Walk is extremely important to the City's tourist industry and is second only to the Alamo in the number of visitors annually. High visibility of law enforcement personnel is necessary to assure that the River Walk remains safe and that citizens and visitors continue to perceive it as an excellent entertainment location.

It was the recommendation of the SAPD personnel studying this area that the Park Rangers should continue to perform River Walk law enforcement duties. It would necessitate a substantial increase in staffing and training in flood control and noise monitoring by the SAPD to achieve the same level of service and visibility, at a substantially higher cost. (In budget considerations, one SAPD police officer costs approximately as much as two Park Rangers).

Section 3. Shift Management Policies

No topic in law enforcement today is more discussed, disagreed upon, and misunderstood than deployment and assignment policies. The practice that developed is variously termed preventive patrol, interception patrol, random patrol or routine patrol. Essentially, it involves the amount of personnel to be assigned to moving about an assigned area in a manner designed to prevent or intercept crimes. The widespread employment of preventive patrol has been based on the belief that it contributes to the achievement of important objectives, i.e. preventing crime from occurring; or by intercepting crimes in progress. It has long been held, therefore, that the more personnel assigned to these functions, the higher the rate of goal achievement. That is to say, the more "free patrol time" or "uncommitted time" that is available, the higher the contribution to the attainment of the objectives, and the assumption that people will feel more safe. Unfortunately, when the data is analyzed, there are no significant differences found in any of the indicators between control, proactive, and reactive. Nor does eliminating patrol or adding extra patrol have any effect on reported crime, victimization, arrests, traffic citations, fear of crime, or citizen satisfaction.

Therefore, it is important to understand that no clearly accepted method of personnel deployment is available. The academic discussions and disagreements continue. An atmosphere conducive to experimentation and further learning exists today and is the most recommended method of learning what works best.

A. Current Shift Assignment Practice

During the review, the Park Ranger Division could offer no explanation as to the rationale behind the number of Park Rangers assigned to each shift. Nor could they define the reasoning behind relief day configurations, or the history regarding the assignment of personnel to a particular shift.

While the specific numbers may vary, generally there are 28 Park Rangers assigned to daylight, 41 to evening, and 33 to night shift. While the configuration would appear to match the number of Park Rangers to the workload, this remains unsupported by rationale.

The number of relief days assigned to each shift or assignment appears to be based strictly on historical data. Once a set of relief days has been established, it has remained unchanged.

Assignments are made based primarily on seniority. Approximately once every six months, shift and assignment vacancies are posted and interested Park Rangers sign up. The selection(s) and transfers are then made based on seniority. Although this may not always be the case, we could find no evidence that prior training, expertise, or ability were given consideration.

Consideration:

The available research leads inevitably to the conclusion that traditional mobile patrol has little impact on crime, fear of crime, or other major law enforcement objectives. It shows that such refinements as directed patrol, saturation patrol, and aggressive patrol have at least some limited effects on the incidence of street crimes; and that foot patrol and community policing have beneficial effects on fear of crime and citizen satisfaction. There is no reason to expect these findings to differ from the past experience of Park Rangers.

Therefore, it is important to realize that to be successful we must identify the goals and objectives that the City expects the Park Rangers to accomplish, select the most qualified individuals to accomplish them, and hold them and their supervisors accountable for achievement. This cannot be accomplished under the current staffing policy.

Park Ranger placement to shifts or other assignments should be based on minimum qualifications, performance evaluations, ability, education, and unit goals and objectives. Seniority should be used as a determining factor only where all other factors are equal.

B. Shift Change Procedures

Park Rangers presently spend a great deal of time waiting for roll call, radio assignments, and vehicles. This results in roll call and reporting taking up to one hour to complete. This delay can be compounded by roll call not starting on time, on-duty Park Rangers returning from the field late, supervisors not having assignments, vehicles, radios, and training information prepared in a timely fashion and lack of a computerized roll call system. There is a particular concern with the current administrative directive that allows Park Rangers to call in sick or absent up to one hour after the start of their assigned shift.

On-duty Park Rangers returning from the outer parks may start to return up to thirty minutes prior to their call-in time. If oncoming roll calls are lengthy, the time when there are no Park Rangers in the field may exceed one and one-half hours. This can be especially problematic during the change from evening to night shifts, as these are historically high incident time frames.

Consideration:

The Park Ranger supervisors currently prepare for roll call and make necessary changes in assignments the day prior to the day of roll call. After the start of this review, a change to the process used by the SAPD was instituted, in which one supervisor reports to duty thirty minutes to one hour prior to roll call to handle officer call-ins, make necessary last minute adjustments, distribute mail, and prepare for any roll call training. This allows for roll call to start immediately at the scheduled time and requires Park Rangers to be present at the required starting time. Once roll call has been completed, supervisors are present in the parking lot to assure timely check-in of Park Rangers and to make any last minute vehicle changes.

While it is understood that these changes will not alleviate all concerns associated with Park Ranger roll call, they will go a long way toward creating a disciplined atmosphere where attention to detail and individual accountability encourage a more rapid changeover of Park Rangers to and from the field. A review of administrative directives affecting roll calls should be conducted, particularly in regard to the time allowed for sick call-in, which can make assignment actions difficult to forecast.

Consideration:

One of the reasons identified as delaying Park Ranger response to the field was the daily issuing of radios. Permanently assigned radios would facilitate this aspect of shift change, but do not have to be made take-home radios for this initiative to be effective.

Consideration:

Working with the SAPD Information Systems, during September and October, 2001, Park Ranger supervisors and administrative staff were instructed in the use of several

computer programs, including Police Computer Assisted Dispatch (PCAD) and Police Reporting Tracking System (PRTS) operations. These programs will assist in computerizing vehicle, work assignments, and report review and reduce and/or eliminate existing hard copy documentation that is time consuming and unnecessary given today's technology.

Due to the number of operations that have now been computerized, there is a definite need for additional computers in the administrative offices. Currently five supervisors have to share two computers. This is not practical and needs to be addressed in order to accommodate required data input and retrieval in a timely manner.

C. Institution of Four Day Workweek for the Outer Parks District

Through analysis of patrol priorities and workload statistics, the review team found that a significant decrease in the need for service and coverage exists between the hours of 3:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. on a daily basis in the Outer Parks District. The vast majority of calls for service and on-sight response by district Park Rangers occurs between the hours of 12:00 noon and 1:00 a.m. An evaluation of the workload statistics for the year 2000 showed that only 323 calls, or approximately 5 percent of the total number of reported or on-sight patrol response, were handled between the hours of 3:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. Further evaluation revealed that a full two-thirds of that number were on-sight calls.

Due to the unique nature of activity on the River Walk and the Entertainment District, including the constant potential for flood control duties by Park Rangers, the patrol operations outlined in this proposal do not apply to operations in the Entertainment District.

This proposal revises the working hours of the Outer Parks District shifts to accommodate a four-day workweek. It reassigns the sergeant and sixteen Park Rangers currently assigned to the night shift to daylight and evening hours. Working hours for the daylight or "A" shift would be from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.. Working hours for the evening or "B" shift would be from 5:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m.

The San Antonio Police Department will continue to patrol neighborhood parks during daylight and evening hours. In addition, to preclude any gap in coverage, the SAPD has accepted responsibility to exclusively handle all activity in all City parks after 3:00 a.m. and before 7:00 a.m. daily. (See Park Ranger and SAPD Workload for 2000 at Attachment 1.)

The redistribution of Park Ranger resources accomplishes several major objectives:

- Allows shift supervisors to more effectively allocate personnel to cover problem areas while leaving adequate manpower to handle routine patrol responsibilities

- Allows increased patrol focus on high usage areas such as large urban parks and special use facilities, especially on weekends
- Increases manpower for assignments to recreation centers
- Allows for district coverage during change of shifts
- Reduces overcrowding of headquarters facilities during change of shifts
- Reduces the shift differential budget
- Maintains 24-hour coverage in the Entertainment District
- Requires no increase in authorized positions

A review of the City of Austin, Texas, Park Police four-day workweek was instrumental in the development of this plan. The alignment of manpower and associated cost savings is addressed in Chapter 17, “*Staffing/Budgetary Considerations*”.

Section 4. Problem Solving Deployment Strategies

Since the 1970s, studies such as the Kansas City Preventive Patrol Study and others continue to dispel many assumptions commonly held by law enforcement about their efficiency and effectiveness. For example,

- Preventive patrol has been shown to be costly, producing only minimal results toward a reduction of crime
- Rapid response to calls has shown to be less effective at catching criminals than educating the public to call the police more quickly after a crime has been committed
- Response time is largely unrelated to the probability of making an arrest or locating a witness
- Despite their best efforts, police have little impact on preventing crime

Realizing this, it is important that the Park Ranger Division not invest a significant amount of their resources in practices that are likely to prove ineffective or inefficient.

Five factors have been identified that strongly suggest new strategies must be adopted:

- The Park Ranger Division has been preoccupied with traditional approaches, i.e., reactive rather than proactive law enforcement, at the expense of effectiveness
- It devotes most of its resources to responding to calls for service and too small a percentage to acting on its own initiative to prevent or reduce community problems
- The community is a major resource with enormous potential that has been untapped by the Park Ranger Division
- The time and talent of the available rank-and-file are not being used effectively
- Efforts to improve the division have failed because they have not been defined through clear vision and leadership.

Therefore, it has become necessary to consider a whole new way of thinking about Park Ranger operations. Research shows that problem solving is a new way of thinking about park law enforcement and has the potential to reshape the way Park Rangers are deployed. This change advocates efficiency with effectiveness and quality over quantity, and encourages collaborative and creative resolutions to park crime and fear of crime.

Consideration:

It is the recommendation of this review that the Park Rangers move away from the traditional, incident-driven, immediate response strategy that has guided their operations to date.

Unlike the San Antonio Police Department, the Park Ranger Division does not need to respond as rapidly as possible to citizens' requests for service, regardless of the situation's urgency. Within the Park Ranger Division, differential response strategies must be designed to maintain an optimum balance between too much and too little resource allocation in responding to requests for service. The thrust of all recent research shows that the immediate dispatch, incident-driven model does little to enhance the capacity to fight crime, and moving away from this model would have little adverse effect on citizen satisfaction with Park Rangers.

The reduction or elimination of citizens' concerns is the "bottom line" of this results-oriented strategy. It is important to remember that many new programs and/or strategies fail to achieve their goals, not because the ideas or theories underlying the programs were faulty, but because the programs were not implemented properly. Implementation failures occur for any of several reasons:

- Sufficient resources were not provided
- The operational plan (policies, rules and guidelines) was inadequate
- Program personnel were not adequately prepared to fulfill their responsibilities
- Program personnel failed to carry out their responsibilities (intentionally or unintentionally)
- Circumstances changed in ways that rendered the program or personnel unable to adequately respond

To address Park Ranger response in the Outer Parks District, we seek to ensure that:

- The Park Rangers respond to both City maintenance and citizen demands
- The Park Rangers and citizens negotiate a consensus about the nature of the park system and how it can be improved
- The policies and practices of the Park Rangers are official, legitimate, and have continuity over time
- Both the citizens and the Park Rangers develop yardsticks to measure performance.

This is to be accomplished through the following:

1. The San Antonio Police Department would continue to have first responder status to all *emergency* calls to parks
2. Park Rangers would be assigned to work individually, in pairs, or in teams as needed. Random patrol by Park Rangers would be eliminated except as outlined herein
3. Park Ranger response would be limited to set policy that would impose top-down rules, guidelines or constraints on the discretion of low-ranking decision makers in the call-response process
4. The ability of Park Ranger supervisors to influence resource allocation beyond the establishment of shift schedules and patrol assignments would be increased
5. Through the utilization of crime analysis, calls for service, and crime mapping, Park Rangers working the Outer Parks District would be assigned on a daily basis to specific parks where a group or pattern of crimes, cases, calls, incidents, or complaints has been identified. Analysis will focus on both criminal and order-maintenance problems. Calls for service will be analyzed for both chronic call locations and chronic call people. Crime mapping provided by SAPD analysts will be used to locate high-crime areas. Key components are partnerships with the community, the clustering of calls, and the identification of community resources to assist in the resolution of identified problems
6. Response to calls for service would be limited to those calls within identified problem-oriented parks
7. The purpose of this staffing strategy is to limit Park Ranger service to those parks where specific problems have been identified and solutions to those problems developed through cooperation with the other city departments, the community, and those specifically affected by the problem
8. It would be the responsibility of the Park Ranger supervisors to continually monitor problem solving strategies and targeted park areas to assure that problems are being solved and that Park Rangers are not just reacting to the harmful consequences of problems
9. The effectiveness of all responses would be reviewed and evaluated so that the division can systematically learn what does and does not work

Section 5. Use of Citizens in Community and Problem Solving Initiatives

“The community is among the major untapped resources available...for dealing with problems, and engaging the community holds the potential for involving informal controls that are more permanent and more effective...” (Herman Goldstein, *Problem Oriented Policing*).

A. Volunteers in Park Service

The San Antonio Police Department, for example, utilizes the voluntary services of local citizens to enhance existing services and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization.

The Volunteers in Policing Program is a highly structured volunteer program where interested citizens and college interns volunteer their time as non-sworn, non-paid members of the department. The program is divided into a number of volunteer positions that fall under a two-tiered system. The first is the daytime volunteer and the second, the special project volunteer. Volunteers are currently used in a wide variety of positions. Their services relieve both sworn and civilian personnel from routine, time-consuming tasks, enhance the delivery of services, and contribute to the public safety of the citizens of San Antonio.

Consideration:

One of the most noticeable exceptions within the Park Ranger Division is its lack of community involved or oriented programs. Since the late 1980s, law enforcement throughout the nation has centered its attention on neighborhood and community involvement in crime awareness, prevention, and fear-free environment efforts. The San Antonio Police Department through local, state, and federal grants has not only increased its manpower and resources through attention to this movement, but has changed its mission, design and philosophy. The Park Ranger Division, however, has no community-based programs and operates independently of community input except through formal City channels.

Working with the San Antonio Police Department's Community Services Unit, the Park Ranger Division should be tasked with the identification and creation of community involved programs in cooperation with SAPD's Volunteers in Policing program. This high priority initiative is the foundation for other programs recommended throughout this report. Without community support and involvement, the Park Ranger Division will never achieve its potential in customer service.

B. Cellular on Park Patrol

The SAPD's Cellular on Patrol program was developed in conjunction with Southwestern Bell Mobile Systems in 1992. Southwestern Bell, now Cingular, provides cellular telephones and free airtime to members of the program patrolling their neighborhoods. Training is provided to citizens who desire to participate. This curriculum-specific crime watch, crime prevention, and crime identification and reporting training consists of 8 hours of classroom and 8 hours of riding time with a neighborhood police officer.

It has been learned through this process that no one is more knowledgeable about crime in any given area than the residents themselves. As a mechanism for residents to participate in creating and maintaining a secure environment, the SAPD Cellular on Patrol program

has proven to be one of the most effective weapons against crime. Since the Cellular on Patrol program was established, over 6,000 San Antonio citizens have completed the training.

Consideration:

The Park Ranger Division should establish and maintain an ongoing Cellular on Parks Patrol program in cooperation with the SAPD Community Services Unit, in cooperation with the SAPD's Cellular on Patrol program. The Parks and Recreation Department would develop a curriculum and training program specific to San Antonio parks. They would then actively recruit trainees and establish relationships with community members to assure neighborhood involvement in park security, maintenance, and protection.

C. Adopt-a-Park Program

A neighborhood Adopt-a-Park program is intended to motivate neighbors to do something positive about their parks. Working with SAPD SAFFE officers (see Section 7 below for a description of SAFFE) and the Park Ranger Division, the program would allow for groups to set up meetings, identify problems, learn crime prevention through a specialist's presentations, and develop activities to deter problems. It would strengthen the bonds among people in the program and in the neighborhood, which in turn can reduce crime. It would further complement the efforts of the Cellular on Park Patrol and Volunteers in Park Service programs.

Section 6. Park Rangers as *Community Operations/Resource Education (CORE) Officers*

During the late 1990s the San Antonio Police Department created a program that became known as "*San Antonio Fear Free Environment*" or SAFFE. The purpose of the program was to improve the relationship between the police and the community through three objectives:

- To form partnerships with community residents and other private sector organizations that would help in solving the problems of crime and fear of crime
- To identify the fundamental causes of fear in the community and establish solutions to secure the neighborhood
- To use a problem oriented approach to determine the underlying causes of crime and community instability from both citizen and police perspectives

This program initially gave two police officers from each substation specific responsibilities such as working with citizens, homeowner associations, and civic and business organizations to find collaborative ways to impact crime and the fear it perpetuates. Along with other community programs, SAFFE has been credited with turning around neighborhoods, reducing the fear of crime, and unifying citizens and the

police department. The results are clear: to effectively reduce crime, total community involvement and commitment are required.

Consideration:

There are currently 29 Parks and Recreation community centers in San Antonio. These centers have the capacity to serve hundreds of school-age children as well as young and elderly adults, and can serve as the hub of social outreach and educational programs. Today, however, some centers are more utilized than others, some have more crime associated with them than others, and as a result some centers and the parks that support them have less appeal to the public.

Building on the success of the SAPD SAFFE program, consideration should be given to assigning one Park Ranger to four or five parks that include community centers. These Park Rangers, six in all, would be called Community Operations/Resource Education (CORE) officers, trained in community policing, problem solving and neighborhood involvement through a specialized employee development program.

CORE officers would operate as the eyes and ears of the Parks and Recreation Department in the assigned parks and community centers. They should concentrate their patrol effort in and around areas of the parks where youth are known to congregate, maintaining high visibility and working in conjunction with park maintenance and community center personnel to identify factors indicating crime potential. By reporting maintenance needs on a timely basis, they can contribute to rapid correction and counteract any adverse public perception of park security in the past.

While patrolling their assigned parks and facilities, CORE officers would be immediately available to supplement the outer parks patrols as needed; their Monday-Friday, 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. shift provides continuity during the Outer Parks daylight-evening shift change. In addition, CORE officers would be required to promote park involvement by appearing at schools, neighborhood meetings, and City showcases. Where appropriate, they would be prepared to describe the parks' natural and cultural resources to help park visitors and neighbors understand their impact on the parks. They should also educate the public on the value of maintaining park resources as a crime deterrent. CORE officers would also be responsible to establish and maintain the community involvement programs outlined in Section 5 above, and serve as recruiters and supporters for park and community center programs.

A. Community Centers where CORE Officers Would Be Utilized

Under this plan, six Park Rangers would be assigned to 28 parks with community centers (Almaguer Dance Center is not included). CORE officers would work flexible hours centered around their 1:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. weekday shift, identified as the peak hours for youth activity. The following suggests how the officers would be distributed across the City's community centers:

Officer:	Community Center:	Location:
#1.	Copernicus Center (2) Southside Lions Ruth Woodard Center Bodie Center Lou Hamilton Center	5003 Lord 3100 Hiawatha 1011 Locke 900 Rigsby 1700 Nacogdoches
#2	Dawson Center Denver Heights Lockwood Center Lincoln Center	2500 E. Commerce 300 Porter 700 N. Olive 2915 E. Commerce
#3	Garza Center Lackland Terrace Meadowcliff Center Millers Pond South San Center	5627 Seacroft 7902 Westshire 1240 Pinn Rd. 6075 Old Pearsall Rd. 2031 Quintana
#4	Cuellar Center Frank Garrett Multi-Service Sonny Melendrez Center San Juan Brady Gardens Tobin Center	5626 San Fernando 1400 Menchaca 5906 W. Commerce 2307 S. Calaveras 1900 W. Martin
#5	Harlandale Center Normoyle Center Palm Heights Center Ramirez Center Roman Center	300 Sussex 700 Culberson 1201 W. Malone 1011 Gillette 10030 Ruidosa
#6	Lions Field Commanders House Joe Ward Center Woodlawn Center	2809 Broadway 645 S. Main 435 E. Sunshine 1103 Cincinnati

Section 7. Park Ranger Target Teams

If the Park Rangers are to respond to the increasing community, political and occasional media pressures to “do something” about urban incivilities in our parks, more needs to be learned about what works best in solving park disorder and the appropriate resources must be directed toward this initiative. It is recognized that park disorder, including drunks, graffiti, panhandling, youth gangs, prostitution, narcotics and sexual predation creates citizen fear and reduces park usage. Left unattended, it can also signal that nobody cares about what happens in the parks which often leads to more serious disorder

and crime. Such signals of social disorganization then create both fears among citizens and invites predators of all types into the parks. Perhaps the most important factor, which influences any person's satisfaction with park usage and enjoyment, is doing so in an environment of safety. The primary purpose in the creation of the Park Ranger Target Team was to address the problems of urban incivilities that were occurring within the park system.

Evaluating the effectiveness of the efforts of the Target Team is no easy task. We understand that traditional quantitative measures, such as the number of arrests, reports written, calls answered, miles driven, and tickets issued do not really measure the effectiveness of the unit. If the problem persists, strategies need to be adjusted that target the specific environmental factors that make the crime easy to commit, whether that is the lack of law enforcement presence, inadequate lighting, poorly designed structures, failure of the court system to place the proper emphasis on the crimes committed, or any of a multitude of other considerations.

A. Current Practices

Since August of 1997, the Park Ranger Division has had primary responsibility for crime prevention, detection, and apprehension of certain offenses within the San Antonio park system. Since that time, the San Antonio Police Department has ceased all operations involving public decency cases within the park system, leaving that challenge to the Park Rangers.

In an effort to best address this responsibility, a one-corporal, four-Park Ranger Target Team was created. (There is currently one Park Ranger vacancy in this unit). The Park Ranger Target Team is deployed only during the daylight hours, approximately 12 days per month, and has consisted of the same members since its inception. With varying relief days, i.e. two with Sunday/Monday, one with Thursday/Friday, and one with Friday/Saturday, there is no set schedule, specific targets, established goals and objectives, performance review, or evaluation of what works and what does not.

In addition to their normal patrol activities and target responsibilities, these Park Rangers are also used to support community relations activities such as career days and neighborhood sweeps.

Although no new members have been added since the program's inception, the selection process would consist of an interview with a panel consisting of a lieutenant, the Target Team corporal, and one Target Team member. The final selection would be at the discretion of the chief.

In discussions with SAPD Vice detectives, they stated that in their opinion, the Target Team was competent to do the work. The SAPD provided training and protocols for plain clothes Park Ranger operations in City parks. The activities targeted are concentrated in the parks due to the concealment provided by off-road areas and restroom facilities.

Although the targeted activities are illegal when undertaken in the public's view, they are non-remunerated consensual acts and more properly investigated by the Park Ranger Division, whose security efforts are also concentrated in the City parks. On the other hand, SAPD Vice Unit Operations are focused on neighborhoods, businesses, and areas the general public accesses on a daily basis as they go about their affairs.

During fiscal years 1999 and 2000 and through October 2001, working approximately 12 days per month, the Target Team accounted for 391 public decency cases. (For purposes of this report, public decency cases refer to indecent exposure, sexual contact assault, public lewdness, and other sexual oriented type offenses). Some of these cases developed as a result of Target Team surveillance operations in various parks. Others occurred in response to calls from the public; note that in Chapter 4, *Park Ranger Workload, Facilities and Equipment*, Section 1, indecent exposure complaints ranked third in frequency of calls to daylight shift Park Rangers during 2000, and second in frequency through September 2001.

B. Concerns Identified

1. No Rotation/Lack of Sufficient Teams

While there is a need for some personnel to have a long-term assignment to this type of investigation to establish continuity, generally assignments should be of short duration. The work is demoralizing, frustrating, and dangerous, and often is performed without the kind of backup needed to assure the full safety of the law enforcement personnel involved. This can best be evidenced by the fact that these types of operations only take place during the daylight hours. Using the same law enforcement personnel to deal with individuals who live within this culture over and over again makes them easily recognizable to the violators and seriously curtails the effectiveness of the team. The Park Ranger Division has used the same personnel for this activity since 1997.

It is clearly acknowledged that it takes a certain personality and commitment to do this type of enforcement. Understanding this, it is essential that careful screening of candidates occurs in the selection process. Additionally, it is imperative that enough Park Rangers be trained and experienced to assure adequate downtime between involvement while maintaining continuity of the initiative.

Consideration:

Chapter 8, Section 3.C. outlines a reorganization of Park Ranger patrol deployment in what is referred to as the Outer Parks District. In this reorganization, Park Rangers would be deployed in teams to work on specific problems within various parks.

It is recommended that a minimum of twenty Park Rangers and two supervisors from the Outer Parks District shifts (ten Park Rangers and one supervisor from each shift), be trained to conduct operations involving public decency incidents in the parks. This

contrasts with the four Park Rangers currently available. This would give the Park Ranger Division sufficient flexibility in personnel to lessen the chance of burnout or recognition by offenders, substantially increase Park Ranger safety, and afford the opportunity to investigate multiple sites at any given time.

Consideration:

The current Target Team concept, while perhaps the most effective initiative within the Park Ranger Division, lacks efficiency and does not afford the involved Park Rangers the degree of safety that could be needed in extraordinary circumstances.

2. Training

Park Rangers involved in various types of special operations must stay current with the latest research, legal opinions, and best-recommended professional practices, including technological advances if they are to avoid physical harm and critical liability exposure. To do anything less obviously puts the Park Ranger, the City, and the community at great risk.

Consideration:

Current, timely training and retraining schedules must be incorporated into the Target Team standard operating procedures, and the necessary budget to assure that it can be achieved should be considered.

3. Equipment Needs

When dealing with public decency crimes, the outcome of the case often depends on the credibility of Park Ranger's word against that of the violator. Technological applications that support the Park Ranger's credibility would assist greatly in performing this task.

During the course of this review, the Park Ranger Target Team began working with the SAPD covert surveillance unit to acquire some skills and knowledge of the types of sound and video equipment available to assure quality cases as well as Park Ranger safety. Currently the Park Ranger surveillance and monitoring equipment is limited to one Polaroid camera.

Consideration:

Of the various law enforcement initiatives undertaken by the Park Rangers, it is the consensus of this review that without enforcement in large urban parks, the assumption appears valid that park usage by citizens and neighborhood groups would decrease and fear of crime in parks would increase.

As mentioned in paragraph 4 below, “*Need to Improve Park Ranger/Prosecutor Relations*,” in making public decency cases, the bottom line is Park Ranger credibility. This review revealed that municipal court prosecutors were concerned over the lack of independent documentation of the cases, i.e. audio/video recordings.

While it is easy to spend many thousands of dollars on surveillance equipment, basic high-quality professional audio and video can be obtained for as little as \$5,500 per set. Park Rangers would need at least two sets of equipment to avoid lengthy maintenance and repair downtime. One set was purchased during the review, and the second is highly recommended. Costs for the second set are included in the estimate of general expenses shown in Chapter 17, *Staffing/Budgetary Considerations*.

Future budgets should include higher quality and more varied types of investigative surveillance type equipment. Cameras mounted on poles and within various other objects with audio available have proven very successful in these types of investigations.

4. Need to Improve Park Ranger/Prosecutor Relations

During the course of this review, discussions were held with the head prosecutor in Municipal Court about the Target Team. Issues involving lack of audio/video verification of criminal conduct, and entrapment were discussed. Additionally, a concern was expressed about poor report writing and the lack of detail in written reports.

Consideration:

Working together, Municipal Court prosecutors and the Park Rangers should develop a written standard operating procedure for handling public decency cases. The procedure should be reviewed and updated as needed to assure that it remains current.

One Park Ranger should be delegated the additional duty of liaison between the Park Rangers and the prosecutor’s office. The duties would include Park Ranger and prosecutor inquiries, obtaining advice on legal procedures and changes, and communicating day-to-day issues that may arise.

Newly appointed and experienced prosecutors should be invited to ride along with the Target Team on a periodic basis to see first hand the challenges, responsibilities, difficulties, and scope of the problem with which they are assigned to pursue.

5. High Crime Parks

The highest crime rates are found in large urban parks located in a cross section of council districts that contain playgrounds, walking trails, restrooms, sporting facilities, and have some of the highest public visitation, involvement and usage. With the knowledge that this activity is occurring, and at times in full view of the public, it can only be assumed that over time and without proper deterrence, park usage and enjoyment

will begin to decrease. Once a park has gained a reputation (such as Travis Park downtown gained many years ago), that reputation continues long after the problem has been resolved. Citizens continue to avoid that park based solely on outdated and untrue rumor and speculation.

Section 8. Potential Enforcement of an Expanded Alcohol Restriction in Parks

Just prior to the conclusion of this review, the Parks and Recreation Department briefed City Council on a proposal to restrict alcohol in all City parks, with several specific exceptions. Alcohol is already prohibited in 63 parks, and enforcement is currently the responsibility of the Park Rangers. Council expressed interest in whether the Park Rangers can enforce a wider restriction within existing resources.

Based on the recommended patrol deployment in the Outer Parks District, more Park Rangers will be available for duty during the hours of highest alcohol use, 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. This increased availability will be primarily focused on large urban parks and sports complexes, where the more significant violations are expected to occur. The result will be additional patrol time in these areas. The CORE officers will also be available to provide continuity during the Outer Parks District shift change.

The patrol deployment and operational changes recommended here will facilitate effective enforcement of an expanded alcohol restriction, if it is established.

Section 9. River Walk Flood Control Assignment

It is the responsibility of the Park Ranger Division to monitor and maintain the level of depth in the river along the River Walk in downtown San Antonio. By measuring the depth of the river at its lowest point, which is on the river side of the Hilton Hotel, the Park Rangers monitor any rise or fall in the river level and adjust the river in-take gates accordingly. Without proper adjustments, a slight rise in the river floods the Hilton Hotel lobby area.

At one time river level adjustment was the responsibility of the Fire Department. It has been argued that the responsibility should be transferred to the San Antonio River Operations. However, it is recommended that the responsibility remain with the Park Rangers. Park Rangers are adequately staffed to handle the responsibility and maintain the necessary 24-hour presence. It should be noted, however that the river gates were designed to handle any fluctuations in the water level automatically. Apparently, this automation has never worked properly. Park Rangers continue to use a monitoring stick and manually adjust the river gates accordingly.

CHAPTER NINE

Optimal Supervision Structure

Section 1. Management

While it is often not recognized as such, the San Antonio Park Ranger Division is the third largest law enforcement department in Bexar County. Managing a large Park Ranger division is not an easy task. Employees work in a variety of functional activities, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and are geographically dispersed throughout the City. These conditions complicate management communication and control, and result in a condition where some employees are, in effect, isolated from top management. This situation is complicated by the fact that management processes are influenced by a wide variety of conditions which are often not under the control of managers.

The current Park Ranger Division managers have dealt with these conditions for years, and most of the incumbent supervisors have spent their entire careers in this environment. Several issues that have historically hindered division operations are outlined below:

- Allocation and use of resources
- Little, if any, management planning is done in the division
- Managers have not been trained in basic planning activities
- Budget process appears to build from previous budgets rather than from an assessment of resources and needs
- Problems with communications, i.e., lack of directives and standard operating procedures, results in Park Rangers not knowing or following policy
- No formal inspection activity, and disciplinary actions perceived as inconsistently applied

Consideration:

Strengthening the management of any organization is a long-term process that requires both enhancements to management systems and improvement in the skills of the managers themselves.

The Park Ranger Chief should be held responsible for the effective performance and overall management of the Division. This implies that the Chief be given the authority and managerial flexibility necessary to accomplish this effectively. The Park Ranger Chief should be heavily involved in carrying out the policies as outlined by the Parks and Recreation Division, City Management, and City Council. He should not be required to be involved in routine daily activities (e.g. transfers, uniform specifications, discipline, training, review of attendance sheets, employee performance appraisals, accident reports, etc.) Rather, he should concentrate on broad policy issues and major problems (e.g.

community perceptions of the Park Rangers, staffing, establishment or annual division goal and objective attainment, development of action plans to assure performance standard achievement, and strategic planning). (See Chapter 11, *Leadership Development*). This can best be accomplished through the introduction of a Captain position to serve as an executive officer.

Sergeants and Lieutenants should not be leaders by virtue of their rank, but because they exercise good judgement in decision making processes. This is especially important since many Park Rangers work largely without supervision and interact continually with the public. Leadership has a direct impact on morale and job satisfaction and, therefore, influences performance, attitude, efficiency, effectiveness, and conduct. This can only be accomplished through effective selection and training.

The following bullets attempt to address the issues listed earlier:

- Communications channels must be utilized and increased personal contact initiated. Disciplinary philosophy should emphasize corrective rather than punitive processes.
- Budgetary process must become proactive and inclusive with staffing levels, equipment, programs, and expenditures reviewed internally with input from all levels.
- Supervisors and managerial personnel should be required to review operations and activities and develop written plans to address known problems.
- Supervisory roles should be defined and should include the responsibility for providing training, identifying training needs, monitoring subordinates' activities, evaluating subordinates' performance, and controlling and inspecting subordinates' conduct.

Section 2. Creation of the Rank of Captain

The opportunities for improvement identified in present management practices and the discovery of some inadequacies in the present organizational structure leads to the recommendation of the creation of the rank of Captain within the Park Ranger Division. The Park Ranger Chief should fill this position through the current competitive process. The Captain would be instrumental in assisting the Park Ranger Chief in managing the division. He would be responsible for implementation of divisional policy, freeing the Chief from day-to-day activities.

The Captain should perform and be held accountable for the following functions:

- *Final preparation of the budget
- *Ongoing budget review and control
- *Long Range Planning
- *Development and communication of policies and procedures

- *Ongoing analysis of organizational structure and relationships
- *Preparation of annual reports
- *Evaluation and allocation of resources and workload based on crime analysis
- *Coordination of activities and resolution of intra-divisional problems
- *Personal review of major investigations
- *Development of training needs
- *Recommendation on selection of personnel
- *Supervision of two lieutenants

Section 3. Park Ranger Lieutenants

There are currently two funded Lieutenant positions within the Park Ranger Division. One position has remained vacant since April, 1997. The vacancy was not filled by the past Chief of the Park Rangers and is scheduled to remain vacant through the remainder of the evaluation process. It is recommended that both positions be filled in accordance with the job duties and responsibilities as outlined in this review.

Under the direction of the Park Ranger Captain, the Lieutenants should perform and be held accountable for the following functions:

- *Initial preparation of unit budget
- *Ongoing review of unit expenditures
- *Development of useful performance and productivity measures
- *Evaluation of unit performance and analysis of its workload
- *Preparation of unit monthly and annual reports
- *Allocation of unit resources
- *Coordination of unit activities
- *Direct supervision and evaluation of sergeants
- *Review of performance evaluations
- *Close review and/or participation in major investigations
- *Inspection of personnel and activities
- *Preparation of staff reports
- *Review of operating schedules to assure effectiveness and efficiency
- *Identification of training needs
- *Involvement in personnel selection process

Under the proposed reorganization, one lieutenant would be responsible for Outer Parks. The other would be in charge of the Entertainment District. (See Chapter 17, *Staffing/Budgetary Considerations*, organization chart)

Section 4. Park Ranger Sergeants

There are currently six Park Ranger sergeant positions in the Park Ranger Division. It has been the responsibility of the six sergeants to supervise the daily activities of 112 Park Rangers. This creates a supervisory ratio of almost 1:19. At the time this review was

conducted, there was one vacant supervisory position. The vacancy created a ratio of almost 1:23, or higher. (Of the departments surveyed across the country, the average ratio of supervisors to Park Rangers was 1:9). Park Ranger supervisors are currently assigned equally to all three shifts. With the current vacancy, the night shift is left with one sergeant to supervise the 38 men and women assigned.

The sergeant should perform and be held accountable for the following functions:

- *Direct supervision of assigned personnel
- *Daily coordination and supervision of work
- *Review and approval of incoming reports prepared by assigned personnel
- *Preparation of employee performance evaluations
- *Periodic inspection of personnel
- *On-the-job training and counseling of assigned personnel
- *Daily Supervision of time and workload
- *Direction, review and approval of training and informational materials/presentations prepared for Park Rangers
- *Act as unit commander when designated in the absence of the Lieutenant
- *Establish meaningful formats and schedules for daily roll call

Section 5. Park Ranger Corporals

There are seven funded and six filled Park Ranger Corporal positions in the Park Ranger organization. Of the six filled positions, three are below the starting hourly wage of a sergeant's position. There is one corporal assigned to daylight shift, one assigned to the Target Team and two each on the evening and night shift.

A review of the job description summary, functions, and requirements of a Park Ranger Corporal and those of a Park Ranger Sergeant reveal that the two positions are almost identical. In discussions with Park Rangers holding the rank of corporal, it is apparent that they view the job as equal to a sergeant. Both positions, for example, list the sergeant's and corporal's responsibilities as, "monitors morale and discipline within the organization and recommends disciplinary action in an equitable manner as required." This language gives the corporal supervisory authority. The job requirements for the two positions are also identical.

This strongly contrasts with the Corporal or "Detective" rank within the San Antonio Police Department. Corporals in the SAPD have no supervisory authority or responsibility. Their job duties, responsibilities, and functions are clearly distinguished from the rank of Police Officer below and Sergeant above. It appears that within the Park Ranger Division these lines are much less clear, and both ranks function basically in the same capacity, one in the absence of the other.

Consideration:

Corporals are not intended to be responsible for direct daily personal supervision or evaluations, yet they routinely fill in for sergeants. All corporal positions fall within a pay range that overlaps the pay range of a sergeant. This results in some Park Ranger corporals earning a higher salary than Park Ranger sergeants.

By reclassifying corporals as sergeants as recommended, the Park Ranger Division can increase its total of direct supervisors to 13. Of the thirteen, one would be assigned to training and twelve to direct Park Ranger supervision. Under this analysis, the ratio of supervisors to Park Rangers would decrease from about 1:19 to an average below 1:9 with only minor fiscal impact.

Consideration:

Since the inception of the Park Ranger Division, there has been a need to more clearly define the collective set of knowledge, skills and abilities (competencies) required of each rank and to progress from entry level to full performance, supervisory, and administrative levels. Clear, distinct, job duties, responsibilities, and requirements must exist for each position leading to an organization structure where lines of communication and decision-making are clearly defined and understood.

Section 6. Park Rangers

As noted at the beginning of this report, Park Rangers have relied on legal descriptions of authority as the definition of their role in the parks. Today, however, a Park Ranger division should have well-defined roles that incorporate community expectations and that provide a framework for the delivery of services. A well-defined role will serve as the foundation for development of policies and procedures and assist the Park Rangers in understanding what is expected of them. The role of a Park Ranger is changing, and as responsibilities become more centered on community involvement and customer service, it becomes imperative that a clear understanding of the new role is not only known, but also accepted.

This report creates the framework for a new definition of Park Ranger service. While traditional law enforcement roles remain center to the job description, team policing concepts and community resource officers are introduced. New opportunities are created in areas such as training, fiscal management and recruiting. Finally, increased job training, job enrichment, problem solving, and promotional opportunities will make the role of a Park Ranger more enjoyable and valuable to the City of San Antonio.

CHAPTER TEN

Park Ranger Training

If the Park Rangers are to stay current with the trends taking shape in society, then so too must Park Ranger training keep pace at both pre-service and post-service levels. It is through training that change, protocol, and philosophy, are first introduced to Park Ranger personnel. The manner in which training is conducted can actually facilitate change and make learning a rewarding experience. Training must become a positive and invigorating experience for all Park Rangers.

Training programs within the Park Ranger Division have been provided for the most part by or coordinated through one permanently assigned training instructor holding the rank of Park Ranger. Seven other part-time certified instructors assist him as necessary.

With the exception of an initial eight to ten week training academy, which appears to vary in time and content, there neither appears to be any organized, planned training activity nor is there a formal procedure to identify and assess training needs. The training classes that are held do not have any logical pattern or relationship and frequently Park Rangers miss class, as scheduling is difficult because of lack of interest or the demands of their respective assignments. In-service classes, when scheduled, are offered when management determines that a specific subject ought to be taught.

Section 1. TCLEOSE State Certification Requirements

Peace Officers in the State of Texas are required by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officers Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) to be licensed prior to being employed in a law enforcement capacity. This 576-hour course of instruction can be obtained from various law enforcement training academies, such as those provided by San Antonio College (SAC) and the Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG). While the State of Texas standardizes the curriculum for all academies, most academies direct their attention toward the law enforcement fields that most represent their attendees. For example, individuals seeking a career as prison or jail guards receive the same basic training as those desiring employment in a municipality; however, those academies which are feeder institutions for the prison system tailor their curriculum to support that need.

Today, individuals seeking employment as Park Rangers with the City of San Antonio most often come with prior experience only as prison or jail guards (33%) or as licensed security guards (60%). While they hold the basic peace officer license, most have little or no experience as street officers or as park security officers.

Beginning in 1996, the San Antonio Park Ranger Division instituted its first cadet training program. This program requires new hires to attend 8 weeks of full-time

training. A review of the curriculum shows that the majority of this time is spent on law review, report writing, defensive tactics, and firearms training. Little or no time is spent on topics such as prisoner handling, defensive and tactical driving, customer service, civil liabilities, risk management, or first aid.

Consideration:

It is recommended that the Park Ranger cadet training program be established in accordance with Section 5, *SAPD Training Review of Park Ranger Academy Curriculum*, of this chapter. Additional courses should be mandated in the curriculum.

One Park Ranger has had responsibility to oversee all training of Park Rangers and new hires. While holding the rank of Park Ranger, this individual frequently acts in a supervisory position by scheduling, designing, overseeing, and budgeting for training. Additionally, he oversees seven part-time trainers and is responsible for all the required documentation and reporting of training to state agencies. It is unreasonable to expect one individual to train and maintain all the necessary records and requirements for the Park Ranger Division. It is recommended that this Park Ranger position remain and a sergeant's position be moved into the training support function. Furthermore, one civilian position would be transferred from the existing dispatcher function and would support the Park Ranger Academy. (See Chapter 13, *Coordination of Park Security Requirements with SAPD*, Section 1.B).

All Park Ranger training is conducted in the roll-call room of the Park Ranger headquarters. This results in training classes being dismissed during periods of roll call or other meetings. During this review a satellite location for training (the Richter Building) was identified and renovation begun for that purpose.

Park Rangers, Airport Police, Code Compliance Abatement, and Animal Control officers should consider combining their resources into a more effective training effort that would eliminate duplication and increase professionalism in training.

Section 2. Mandatory State Training/Firearms Qualifications

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education currently requires all peace officers, as a condition of retaining their state certification, to attend a minimum of forty hours of training every two years. Many of these hours consist of course-specific mandated training. These hours may be obtained through in-service training, schools, seminars, law enforcement network training, Internet or by correspondence. They must be approved and taught by certified TCLEOSE instructors. Additionally, each officer must requalify with his service weapon annually. Park Rangers have generally received 4 hours of range training and 4 hours of classroom training in firearms instruction each year. This training has not always been consistent.

During the period this report was written, it was found that several Park Rangers had failed to meet minimum requirements during their annual firearms requalification.

Consideration:

A review of the training records of the Park Ranger Division revealed that all Park Rangers were up-to-date with their mandated academic TCLEOSE certification training. Some of the records were late getting into the TCLEOSE data base; however, it was unknown whether that was due to processing delays in the Park Ranger Division or late data input at the state level.

Although the academic data appeared correct, further investigation found that five Park Rangers as of October 2001 were carrying a firearm on duty in violation of state required qualifications. It is recommended that measures be taken to assure proper qualification in accordance with State law. *This is an extremely important issue* given the consequences that could result if a Park Ranger becomes involved in an incident with a firearm and that Park Ranger has not qualified in accordance with TCLEOSE rules. Park Rangers failing to qualify must immediately forfeit their weapons, they must be removed from law enforcement related duties, and if timely qualification is not obtained, must be removed from all responsibilities that require a certified peace officer. Once this situation was identified, Park Ranger Division management took all appropriate actions.

Consideration:

Park Ranger initial firearms qualification and training should be upgraded from the current 32 hours to 60 hours. The Park Rangers should strictly adhere to requirements for mandatory firearms requalification. In a review of cases where cities have been involved in legal circumstances involving firearms, training is a primary focus by plaintiff's attorneys. Additional training would better prepare Park Rangers for their law enforcement duties, and would provide evidence of the City's commitment to doing so.

Consideration:

The Park Rangers, Code Compliance Abatement, Animal Control, Airport Police, and any other department within City government that has licensed law enforcement officers should look to combine their firearms training into one effective training effort. Each group's training instructors should be asked to agree on times for training to be conducted for all members.

Section 3. Dispatcher TCIC/NCIC Training

All Emergency Services Telecommunicators must be certified and should have the ability to legally access TCIC/NCIC. These are the Texas and National Criminal Information Centers. Without authorized access, a dispatcher cannot legally check for active wants and warrants on individuals they may encounter in the field. This has a direct effect on Park Ranger safety.

Consideration:

All individuals who are used as full-time or part-time emergency services telecommunicators must be certified in accordance with federal and state law and must be certified if they are to access TCIC/NCIC.

In keeping with other recommendations, strong consideration should be given to transferring all communication functions to the San Antonio Police Department. All SAPD dispatchers meet or exceed the requirements outlined by state and federal law. Annual re-certification and training is mandated through the Police Support Service Division.

Section 4. Mandatory In-Service and Specialized Training

If the Park Ranger Division is to meet the challenges of changing technology, philosophy, communication, and social relationships, it must seek out new processes. As knowledge, methods, and skills in policing increasingly become obsolete over time, it is necessary to move beyond state mandated instructional training into an era where training is re-engineered to align with the changes taking place in the community.

Before any kind of training program can be developed, a mechanism needs to be established to identify and define what the training needs of the Park Ranger Division are. This will require the active support and commitment of all levels of the division.

Consideration:

Many Park Rangers who were hired prior to 1996 have received little or no training in many important law enforcement topics such as those noted below. This lack of training creates a potential liability concern. While the Park Ranger Division currently conducts scheduled in-service training, it is neither consistent nor are all members trained in any given topic during the course of a year. Generally, topics are identified at random and three or four Park Rangers pulled in for one to three days of training. In this fashion, the sheer number of personnel and lack of instructors prohibit all Park Rangers from receiving training. Frequently, Park Rangers scheduled for training call in sick or take vacation days during periods of assigned training and are not rescheduled to make up the time.

Each Park Ranger should receive a minimum of 40 hours of in-service training annually. Training based on TCLEOSE requirements should be provided every two years. City-directed training in non-TCLEOSE subjects should be provided annually. Each Park Ranger would receive advanced scheduling and be required to make up any hours missed. Park Rangers failing to complete the required training would be subject to disciplinary action.

Consideration:

Currently, both the Park Rangers and Airport Police have separate training facilities and instructors. Separately, neither has the manpower or class size to produce quality training in a cost-effective method. Additionally, the Health and Code Compliance Departments have several sworn peace officers. By combining the training function into one unit shared between these departments, more efficient, effective, and quality training could be provided.

A. Customer Service

1. Effective Human Communication

Today's Park Ranger needs well-developed communication skills. He or she is required to communicate effectively and accurately in one-on-one situations with citizens, especially in conflict resolution and mediation situations. This is an area that historically has been problematic for law enforcement officers because they have been trained to take charge of situations and give orders. Because mediation and conflict resolution constitutes an important portion of the Park Ranger function, it is essential that they are equipped with effective skills in these areas.

2. Community Policing

A broad-based and apparently accelerating shift in policing philosophy away from traditional law enforcement toward a community-oriented model has attracted the favorable attention of politicians, police executives, citizens, and academics. While the San Antonio Police Department through in-service, practical application, and roll-call training has remained on the cutting edge of this trend and has continually developed its personnel through hundreds of hours of practical application and instruction, the Park Ranger service training in this philosophy has been non-existent. It is important to remember that traditional law enforcement bases its view of professional accountability on the rule of law, community-oriented policing defines efficiency by the ability of law enforcement to draw on the community's resources as well as other relevant government and non-government institutions to facilitate problem solving. This fundamental philosophical change must become standard operating procedure for Park Rangers, which can best be achieved through an adult approach to training and learning.

3. Problem Solving

Park Rangers are required to work with other police officers, citizens, businesspersons, social services, and other persons from all walks of life to solve problems. It is important that Park Rangers learn to work on real-life police/community problems. The very essence of community based policing centers on problem solving. Several of the programs outlined in this report have recognition, assessment, and problem solving in parks as the core element of the program; even deployment is based in part on problem

solving. There are several problem-solving models in practice today and Park Rangers should be familiar with the concepts and be able to place them into practice.

B. Resource Protection

1. Civil Liabilities

The standards of proof in suits against Park Rangers typically require plaintiffs to demonstrate that the defendants violated *general police industry standards* governing the activity in question. It becomes necessary therefore for Park Ranger professionals to know what the standards are and take all necessary steps to assure that they are followed in all standard operating procedures. This requires research and education. Civil liability classes, as they relate to Park Ranger service, should be a part of their regular training program.

2. Risk Management

Park Rangers have a primary responsibility for public and employee safety and for first responder management of emergency operations in the parks. It is imperative that all Park Rangers have a basic understanding of agency policy and their specific responsibilities in this area. An advanced understanding of the constant responsibility of weighing the benefits and risks associated with day-to-day decision making involved in emergency operations should be included in all aspects of training.

Consideration:

Park Rangers need to be trained in yearly in-service programs and through roll-call training to develop a demonstrated working ability to articulate the Park Ranger's responsibility and accountability for public and employee safety. Park Rangers should identify and develop a working knowledge of specific employee and public safety hazards present in each assigned park and become actively engaged in mitigating these hazards and participate in safety inspections of equipment and facilities. They must be able to demonstrate proper use of personal protective equipment, actively participate in safety inspections and public safety programs as appropriate in certain parks, ensuring emergency response readiness, and wise decision making associated with day-to-day and typical emergency first responder response in assigned parks.

3. Crime Prevention through Environment Design

The conceptual thrust of Crime Prevention through Environment Design is that the physical environment can be manipulated to produce effects that will reduce the incidence and fear of crime, thereby improving the quality of life. These behavioral effects can be accomplished by reducing the propensity of the physical environment to support criminal behavior. An understanding of the direct relationship of the design and management of the environment is a prerequisite to increasing success of efforts in reducing the fear of

crime in neighborhood parks. Both offenders and lawful users of any park recognize the environmental cues that say, “This is a safe place-or an unsafe place.” Understanding this, it becomes necessary that the Park Ranger Division work with architects, city planners, and citizens in the design and/or redesign of park space. This will help to assure that proper recognition and attention is given to the adaptation of normal, and natural uses of the environment to target harden it against crime, while not unduly impairing the effective use of the park environment.

Consideration:

Traditionally, park designers have relied on access control and surveillance as design concepts that have emphasized mechanical or organized crime prevention techniques while overlooking, minimizing, or ignoring attitudes, motivation, and use of the physical environment as a crime prevention source. Park Rangers as peace officers, through experience and training, understand and recognize that certain designs while pleasing to the eye, are by the very nature of their construction, opportunities for crime.

Prior to the implementation and beginning stages of any park construction or roadway access, Park Ranger officers, versed in the concepts of crime prevention through environmental design, should be allowed to view and sign off on the proposed development. This results in requiring the Park Rangers to become actively involved and to have ownership in not only the city management team, but in the community and the park itself.

C. Park Operations

1. Parks and Recreation Department Orientation

The Park Ranger Division is only one division within the Parks and Recreation Department. To better serve citizens when asked questions about parks and other Parks and Recreation Department facilities, a working knowledge of the entire department is required. The Park Rangers may not be familiar with all the other divisions within the department and their specific roles and responsibilities.

Consideration:

Based on the current and evolving mission of the Park Rangers, it is recommended that a new course be introduced into the Park Ranger Training Academy to familiarize new Park Rangers with the entire San Antonio park system. The Park Rangers will have more information about the park system and will help them feel part of the entire department. The new course would give an overview of the entire parks department operations. New Park Rangers would receive training on the Recreation Division, the Parks Operations Division, and the Park Natural Area Division. Each division head would provide an overview of their program and would identify how Park Rangers fit into these operations

and how they are relied upon. The orientation would also include an introduction to the work request system that plays a vital part in the maintenance of the City's parks.

2. Personnel Management

Personnel management training is almost non-existent for Park Ranger supervisors. It is recommended that a specific management program be developed that includes problem solving, handling problem employees, the municipal civil service disciplinary process, report writing, budget preparation, technology, and techniques for evaluating goals and objectives.

3. Specialized Training

a. Patrol Boat Training

There is no specialized training given to Park Rangers in the safe operation and maintenance of the river patrol boats. Park Rangers learn only through on-the-job observation of other Park Rangers. A water and boating safety course should be mandated prior to Park Rangers being allowed to operate a boat on the San Antonio waterways.

b. Environment Training in Parks of Significant Interest

The City of San Antonio contains many public parks that have special historical significance. Other parks have unique points of interest, and contain a wide range of diverse and specialized plants, birds, animals, and areas of natural geological significance. Visitors to these areas frequently turn to the Park Ranger for information and answers to questions about the areas they are visiting. Unfortunately, Park Rangers receive no specialized training in any of these topics and often fail to adequately satisfy a visitor's inquiry.

c. Parks and Recreation Department Contracts

The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for over 360 licenses and leases agreements throughout its many parks and special use facilities. These contracts range from lease agreements for use of property from Little League ball fields to license agreements for food booths. Park Rangers need to be familiar with the terms of the agreements in order to enforce park rules and regulation and City ordinances. During the review it was found that Park Rangers require additional training and information in order to enforce the terms and conditions of the license and lease agreements.

Consideration:

In order to provide more information related to contracts to the Park Rangers, the review team recommends specific training be provided to all Park Rangers. The training will be

provided in two phases. The first phase will be 1 to 3 hours of contract training during the Park Ranger Training Academy. The Contract Services Supervisor will provide an introduction to the contracts concept, how the contracts are administered, and the effect these agreements have on Park Ranger responsibilities. The introduction will also include identification of the types of contracts handled by the Park and Recreation Department. The three major types of contracts will be studied: short-term rentals, lease agreements, and license agreements. The short-term rentals are for specific use of a facility and a permit is issued. Lease agreements give people more rights to the property being leased such as Little League fields. The lease provides ownership year-round. License agreements traditionally allow for short-term use of the property such as setting up food booths at Alamo Plaza.

The second phase of contract training would be more detailed and would be part of the in-service training. Specific details of the 360 lease and license agreements would be covered during the training so Park Rangers would be more aware of the specifics of the agreements. Training would include such topics as the responsibilities of the tenants and the City's responsibilities in the agreement. A spreadsheet was created by the Contract Services Supervisor that contains the major contracts Park Rangers would need to be aware of in order to address issues. The Park Ranger supervisors would be taught how to access this spreadsheet in order to relay specific contract information to the Park Rangers when a problem arises. The Contract Services Supervisor will keep this information updated as required.

Consideration:

As part of the recommended fourteen-week training academy, incorporated into in-service training, and as advanced promotional training, all Park Rangers should gain a working knowledge of the history and environmental points of interest for all tourist and education related parks. Under the guidance of the Parks and Recreation park naturalists, a specifically designed curriculum leading to a hands-on, detailed, informative, and highly educational training course should be developed. In addition, each Park Ranger should be equipped with a written, "fact document" or guide about identified topics and points of natural interest within the parks.

Park Ranger training requirements are summarized in the Academy and In-service Training Tables at Attachment 2.

Section 5. Park Ranger Applicant Processing

As traditional models of policing fade, and law enforcement moves toward a more community-oriented, problem-solving philosophy, the selection of Park Rangers who are attracted to community problem solving becomes vital. In addition to traditional traits such as good health, stable work history, and dependability, new traits such as anger control, ability to talk to people, group cohesiveness, integrity, and a logical, practical, and organized style of thinking begin to take precedent. It follows that a systematic

assessment of attributes considered critical by the parks division is incorporated into the hiring process and proactive background investigations be conducted to assure that personality traits consistent with the job duties and requirements are present in potential new hires.

A. Current Practice

Park Ranger applicants complete a City of San Antonio application for employment. Applications are then forwarded to the Park Ranger Chief for review and initial selection. Upon selection, the Human Resources Department of the City of San Antonio is notified, and applicants undergo the process of medical, psychological, polygraph (see below) and criminal history checks. If successful, the applicant is hired.

B. Background Investigations

The Park Ranger initial application for employment requests criminal convictions but does not require applicants to report arrests. Without a formal applicant background investigation being conducted, Park Ranger applicants who may have been involved in serious criminal incidents but were not convicted, or who have had their cases handled through deferred adjudication, may be hired. The Human Resources Department does require applicants to be fingerprinted and checked for criminal history records. Fingerprint cards are sent to Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). This process takes approximately four to eight weeks to complete. In the interim, the Park Ranger applicant may have been hired and may have begun training. This process could conceivably mean that an applicant who has not reported a conviction in another jurisdiction, or who has in the past used an assumed name, could well be hired and trained at the expense and liability to the city prior to receipt of his state and national history. Periodic, updated background investigations are not conducted to assure compliance with the rules and regulations of the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Education.

A flow chart depicting both the current and proposed processes for handling Park Ranger job applicants is shown at Attachment 3.

Consideration:

It was recommended and has been instituted that a patrol position be transferred into a newly created position of Park Ranger Recruiting and Applicant Processing. The Park Ranger assigned to this position was required to undergo a minimum of one-month on-the-job training with the San Antonio Police Department Applicant Processing Unit, and also spent time with the SAPD recruiting unit in an effort to learn how to attract a better candidate for service within the Park Ranger Division.

Consideration:

In discussions with the Chief of Airport Police it was learned that over the years he has reevaluated his position as to who he hires as Airport Police officers. High turnover and lack of career advancement make the job unattractive to young individuals fresh out of law enforcement training or those who are raising families and need higher incomes. He also discussed the differences in attitude and maturity.

In contrast to the Airport Police, which has several retired law enforcement officers working for them, the Park Rangers have only one retired law enforcement officer. The Chief of Airport Police reports that he was more than satisfied with the quality of customer service, training, attitude, and maturity of the retired officers. In light of this, recruitment targets for the Park Rangers need to be reevaluated.

As positions become available, the Park Ranger Division should concentrate its recruitment efforts towards individuals with prior military, state, or municipal law enforcement experience. It must be emphasized that there is no strict age requirement for Park Ranger personnel.

C. Polygraph Investigations

Identifying problematic individuals before they become city employees is a legitimate management goal as the City seeks to enhance quality of service and maintain positive relations with citizens. This is particularly important in human service organizations such as law enforcement that routinely engage in a high level of interactions with citizen-clients and in which individual integrity is paramount. In this effort, pre-hire polygraph examinations play an important role.

Park Ranger applicants are given the same polygraph examination as police applicants receive. However, prior to administering the polygraph, the examiner is given only the first page of the applicant's initial application for employment. No additional information is available and as no background investigation has taken place, the polygraph operator is severely limited in the questioning aspect. Additionally, all Park Ranger applicants must already be licensed peace officers, yet they are NOT given the polygraph based on law enforcement experience that is required of police applicants.

Consideration:

There is a need to assure that any person employed in a law enforcement capacity is of the highest integrity and is totally honest in reporting their backgrounds and job related histories. Without the ability of the polygraph examiner to have access to all available information and without the opportunity to provide the law enforcement related examination, we may allow individuals who do not meet the high standards required of peace officers to become employed. Providing detailed background investigations to the polygraph examiner is imperative in making the polygraph examination effective. All

applicants with prior police experience, regardless of where they are employed with the City of San Antonio, should be given the law enforcement related polygraph.

Section 6. SAPD Review of Park Ranger Academy Curriculum

During October/November 2001, a San Antonio Police Department Training Academy supervisor reviewed the 320-hour (8-week) curriculum of the Park Ranger Training Academy.

The review outlined the site inspection requirements mandated by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officers Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) and made recommendations on improvement in lesson plans, prioritization of training topics, and reproduction of training materials amongst others. Each topic instructed was reviewed and recommendations for improvement suggested. Only materials provided by the Park Ranger Training Academy were reviewed. By the final review in early November, it appeared that all records, lesson plans, and training materials were up-to-date.

Consideration:

The length of the Park Ranger Training Academy should be determined and not allowed to vary from class to class.

A committee should be established to study and recommend the Park Ranger Training Academy curriculum topics. This committee may include, but not be limited to, members of the SAPD Training Academy, the Alamo Area Council of Governments, Parks and Recreation Department, Airport Police, and the Human Resources Department of the City of San Antonio.

Once the curriculum has been selected, the committee would recommend the amount of time needed to successfully train new employees in each curriculum area. The length of the Park Ranger Training Academy would then be determined based upon the total time needed to successfully instruct in all curriculum areas.

In cooperation with the SAPD Training Academy, complete and detailed lesson plans would then be written, reviewed, and/or updated for each curriculum course. The content of the lesson plans would be based on the priority of each topic, the importance of different topics within each subject area, and the amount of time allocated.

Annually, with cooperation from the SAPD Training Academy, the Parks and Recreation Department would reevaluate the Park Ranger Training Academy curriculum in light of constant changes in the law enforcement environment.

Section 7. Field Training Officer (FTO) Program

Field Training Officer (FTO) programs that use practical problems and peer supervision to train law enforcement personnel on the streets have been advocated for a number of

years by law enforcement. Some of the major advantages of field training when properly designed are a decrease in the number of civil liability complaints, the standardization of training and better documentation of recruit performance. The key to any such program is the selection and training of the individuals who will become the field-training officers. Field training, if planned carefully, with special emphasis on having the most qualified officers as field training officers, can be an excellent way to train recruits, increase professionalism, and diminish public cynicism regarding law enforcement.

The current 10-week Park Ranger field training officer program is divided into three phases. A recruit is first assigned to an FTO for four weeks and is trained in what is to be his or her permanent job assignment. They are then transferred to a second FTO for four weeks, who is responsible for instructing the recruit in other duties and responsibilities that they may encounter within the parks. During this training cycle, the recruit is not evaluated. Once this cycle is completed, the recruit is returned to the first FTO for a two-week period in which he or she is evaluated on job performance. Only when the recruit has demonstrated that he/she can meet job performance standards are they graduated from field training to full duty. If an individual is unable to meet the standards, they are subject to termination.

Consideration:

During November 2001, the SAPD Training Academy Field Training Officer coordinator conducted a review of the current FTO program within the Park Ranger Division. The report contains several constructive administrative and procedural changes that would be of benefit to the Park Rangers. Most noteworthy was the recommendation that critique sessions be held weekly between the field training officer, the recruit and their supervisor. This will give the supervisor more timely information as to the recruit's progress. Additional recommendations include a broader scope on evaluation of duties, including both the River Walk and outer park areas and excluding individuals involved in actual classroom training from participating as field-training officers, when possible.

Consideration:

The FTO training manual is an extensive document covering the full scope of the FTO program. While it contains the necessary elements for the program, it is in need of clean up and clarification. In some places the document is difficult to read or understand, it is somewhat ambiguous in parts, and contains many format, spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. A complete cleanup of the document is recommended.

Section 8. Miscellaneous

The San Antonio Police Department issues a daily bulletin, which is designed to keep its police officers informed of city, state, and departmental notices and law enforcement related updates. While most of the information contained therein is of a departmental

nature, law changes, updates, procedural changes, and other information of importance to city employees at large is frequently included therein.

Consideration:

The San Antonio Police Department's daily bulletin can be accessed through the SAPD's web site. On a daily basis, Park Ranger secretarial staff should retrieve the information and make appropriate information available to all Park Rangers during shift roll call. Effective December 2001, this was done.

The Training Academy of the SAPD is responsible for the production of training bulletins on new procedures, laws, court rulings, or other items that need written explanation.

Consideration:

All new SAPD training bulletins are available through the Training Academy or they can be accessed through the SAPD's web site. Park Ranger training officials should check the web site on a weekly basis for new or up-dated training bulletins. They should check their applicability to the Park Rangers and sufficient copies made available to all Park Rangers during shift roll call. Effective December 2001, this was done.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Leadership Development

Closely associated with the training function discussed in Chapter 10 is Leadership Development. Leadership Development may be briefly defined as the planned development of an individual through a series of educational and/or work experiences toward the attainment of career objectives.

At present, there is no leadership development program in the San Antonio Park Ranger Division. The current approach assumes that Park Rangers will develop, on their own, the skills and abilities needed in positions of greater responsibility. This rarely happens.

In part, this stems from the fact that no specific training, assignment or educational prerequisites are considered as part of the promotion process. Time in grade and selection by the chief has been the sole basis for promotion to higher rank and responsibility.

Additionally, the review team concluded that many within the Park Ranger Division perceive themselves to exist not only apart from the Parks and Recreation Department, but outside of the municipal government structure as well. Their isolation and lack of quality leadership has led to little innovation, progression, or inclusion for many years. Understanding this, leadership development within the Park Ranger Division becomes a top priority. It begins with the chief of the Park Ranger Division.

Section 1. Park Ranger Chief

The Park Ranger chief must clearly see him- or herself as not only an integral part of the Parks and Recreation Department, but also a vital part of City government. He or she must be able to clearly articulate what Park Rangers can do for the community, must understand the linkages between economic conditions and crime, and must be an advocate for investment in *non-Park Ranger* resources that impact safety and community vitality. The chief must take the initiative as a team member with other City departments outside Parks and Recreation, including but not limited to the Police Department, Code Compliance, Public Works, Community Initiatives, Neighborhood Action, Planning, and Health. He or she must see the Park Rangers' service to the community as an important contribution to quality of life, and be willing to act as a catalyst for team effort both within and outside City government. In short, the chief must have a vision of the Park Rangers' future value to the City and the knowledge, skill and abilities to make that vision a reality.

Consideration:

In conversations with the Chief of Airport Police and in reviewing the Park Ranger Chief's responsibilities, the importance of extensive, broad-based municipal law enforcement experience became evident. A thorough understanding of municipal government and extensive experience in law enforcement management are vital to the kind of change management that must take place in the Park Ranger Division. Through membership and active involvement in organizations such as the National Recreation Parks Association, the Bexar County Chiefs of Police, Texas Police Chiefs Association, Sam Houston State's Law Enforcement Management Institute, and the Community Policing Consortium, the Park Ranger chief must keep aware of the ever-changing law enforcement management environment.

The ideal candidate would possess a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, parks and recreation management, public administration, business administration, or a related field; a minimum of ten years significant and progressively responsible law enforcement management experience in a metropolitan law enforcement agency; and a strong background in operational planning, communications, labor relations, and inter-governmental/public/community relations.

Section 2. Mandatory Promotional Training

The promotional process is one of the most important administrative functions in the Park Ranger Division. It is the process through which the division is revitalized by importing new supervisory ideas, values, and resources. No matter how well a division is organized or administered, or how fair the selection process may be, if the selected candidates are not properly trained, the division will not reach its full potential. And, while all employees are responsible for implementing the policies and procedures of the division, those promoted to supervisory responsibility carry the added duty to create and maintain a work environment conducive to mission accomplishment.

Consideration:

Law enforcement supervisory and special skills training has undergone substantial improvement in the last several years, resulting in excellent training programs. While Park Ranger supervisors attend the Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) 40-hour supervisor training school, six weeks' on-the-job training specifically designed for each supervisory rank is recommended for all newly promoted employees.

Consideration:

Periodic rotation of assignments, especially for supervisory positions, should be part of a leadership development program. This gives supervisors and subordinates a broader view of the organization and its strengths, weaknesses and needs, thus preparing them for higher responsibility. Assignments based mainly on seniority fail to accomplish this.

Also, for operational reasons, it is recommended that minimum experience levels be determined for each Park Ranger shift and adhered to in assigning personnel.

Section 3. Promotion to Corporal, Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Captain

Since the late 1980s, promotions to all ranks have been at the discretion of the chief. Prior to that time, the City's Human Resources Department provided a written test as a basis for promotion. Candidates to the rank of corporal, sergeant, or lieutenant must have two years of service in the previous rank. Prior to this review, they were interviewed by a panel consisting of a sergeant, lieutenant, and the chief, with the chief making the final decision. According to Park Rangers interviewed by the review team and results of the Park Ranger organizational input survey, favoritism and seniority has been perceived to play a major role in promotions over the last several years.

Consideration:

Consistent with City policy governing promotions at division level, the chief of the Park Ranger Division should make recommendations to the assistant director of the Parks and Recreation Department for selection of lieutenants and captain. These positions should be open to qualified candidates from inside or outside the division.

Specific promotional criteria should be developed for advancement to the rank of sergeant. These criteria may consist of specific requirements such as experience, education and proven performance, and related considerations such as commitment, credibility, innovation, creativity, appropriate risk taking, and decision-making ability.

A more refined interview process utilizing experienced personnel from both inside and outside the Park Ranger Division will allow for third-party recommendations to the chief. Outside panel members may consist of individuals from Code Compliance, Airport Police, school, university, or suburban police departments, military police, or other law enforcement related agencies.

Section 4. Report Writing

A study published in *USA Today* reported that 94% of high school graduates were not well prepared in writing. Research by a national organization noted that 66% of employers had to provide remedial assistance in basic skills. The lack of effective writing skills can be a major barrier to the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization.

During October 2001, members of the Park Ranger Division who responded to an organizational input survey submitted many noteworthy ideas. However, some of the written inputs contained sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors that required rewriting by administrative staff to make them usable. A sampling of written activity reports produced by Park Rangers throughout the year proved no better.

During conversations with the Chief of Airport Police, it was learned that he had faced the same challenge. He addressed the concern by holding supervisors accountable for the quality of written reports.

Consideration:

The San Antonio Police Department utilizes the Police Reporting Tracking System (PRTS) for report review and accountability. This system was introduced into the Park Ranger Division by the SAPD in October 2001.

Under PRTS, a computerized crosscheck between the dispatch computer system and reports turned in by Park Rangers occurs. Supervisors are required to make sure each report is submitted in a timely manner, that it is complete in detail, and meets any legal requirements (e.g., to address elements of the offense).

The PRTS system of report accountability can also be used to assure the quality of report writing. In addition to the above, supervisors will assure that reports are organized properly, with acceptable sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Park Ranger lieutenants will periodically review the PRTS system and associated reports and hold the sergeants accountable for errors.

Recognizing that writing is a complex process and that within any group there will be a wide range of abilities, it is the intent of this procedure to identify those areas (or individuals) that require special attention. Once a specific problem is identified, proper training can be provided on an individual or group basis. Better report writing must become a supervisory and administrative priority, with accountability, proper training, and discipline as vital parts of the solution.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Operating Procedures

Clearly, any law enforcement agency that does not provide its peace officers with clear, detailed, policy manuals and rules and regulations exposes those peace officers and citizens to greater risk. Especially in large jurisdictions, it is critical to make certain that all sworn personnel understand clearly that their badges, weapons and enforcement powers must be used judiciously both on- and off-duty. This can only be accomplished through clear policy and robust training, and by providing objective mechanisms to hold officers accountable for their actions.

Section 1. Rules and Regulations

The Civil Service rules and regulations of the City of San Antonio are dated November 15, 1977. While they are still in effect today, gaps have been created as court decisions and law enforcement trends have evolved. It is important therefore that updates and revisions within the Park Ranger Rules and Regulations be timely. Written rules and regulations stating the do's and don'ts of service as a Park Ranger must be maintained as a viable document rather than one that receives little attention or interest. They must be comprehensive and address those behaviors for which right actions can be differentiated from wrong actions. Properly designed and approved rules and regulations are the first step in demonstrating that the Parks Ranger Division is serious about defining appropriate and inappropriate behavior on the part of its personnel.

Section 2. General Manual

A well-thought out General Manual must be developed and consistently updated, since it serves as the *foundation* of day-to-day quality service. The General Manual is the official statement as to how the division operates. It provides an accurate, authoritative statement on how the Park Ranger mission is to be accomplished and how a wide variety of situations are handled; it dictates the level of quality expected of Park Rangers on the job. In addition, the General Manual serves as an excellent training tool and a source of information for officials and the public. And, it plays a critical role in assuring that Park Rangers adhere to correct procedures as a basis for successful prosecution of the accused in courts of law.

Consideration:

Nothing will affect the Park Ranger Division more positively than the creation of a detailed, complete and up-to-date General Manual such as was initiated during this review. A thorough evaluation of current policies and procedures must be conducted in light of current state and federal legislation, case law, local ordinances, and public expectations. At times, Park Rangers may have only seconds in which to decide how to

react to a situation. Applying both a legal and liability standard to policies and procedures serves to minimize the opportunity for error in their decision making.

With the assistance of the Airport Police and the San Antonio Police Department, all Park Ranger policies and procedures are being reviewed and updated. The Rules and Regulations and General Manual were completed during this review period. However, the first priority of a newly appointed chief of the Park Ranger Division must nonetheless be to again review, revise, and update these directives. The chief has a profound influence on the quality of both the work environment and the services rendered by the workforce. His or her statement of philosophy and policies consistent with that philosophy become the centerpiece for division-level training and administration.

The consolidated, updated General Manual, Rules and Regulations, and Standard Operating Procedures should be issued to each Park Ranger. Supervisors should regularly review each Park Ranger's directives to assure changes have been posted.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Coordination of Park Security Requirements with SAPD

Modern law enforcement is a highly complex profession that requires peace officers to keep themselves on the cutting edge of the law, community relations, politics, technology, medicine, and a host of other disciplines and issues. Law enforcement organizational goals of crime prevention have evolved into a multidimensional construct that must satisfy not only crime detection and prevention but also a host of other community and social demands. No longer can any law enforcement organization operate in isolation. Perhaps one of the best examples of this is the City of San Antonio's nationally recognized "Neighborhood Sweeps Program". This initiative brings together numerous City departments in a coordinated effort to clean up neighborhoods from a criminal, environmental, and economic perspective.

Through initiatives such as this, the City has learned that it works together better as a team. Law enforcement is being brought on board and is playing a vital role as a team member. By sharing resources, technology, information, and personnel, not only are we more effective, we are being more efficient dollar for dollar.

The cost of law enforcement-related technology, facilities, and personnel management is very high, yet the inherent capabilities of many of these functions, is greater than the needs of many of the City's smaller departments. Not being willing, or able, to share technology, facilities and personnel management functions, with other departments results in many of these aspects being too expensive and out of the reach of the smaller departments. This in turn not only hinders their effectiveness and efficiency but creates legal liabilities as well.

Section 1. Park Ranger Dispatcher Communications

During September 2001, the SAPD Communications Training Coordinator studied the communication system of the Park Rangers. In October, members of the SAPD Communications Unit, and the Support Services Division, along with members from the Office of the Chief of Police assigned to review the Park Ranger Division met to discuss the findings and make recommendations concerning Park Ranger communications. The goal of the meeting was to identify the most feasible alternative available to solve problems identified in the present Park Ranger dispatch function from a communications perspective.

A. Current Practices

Dispatcher communications in the San Antonio Park Ranger Division consist of the following activities:

- *Receiving telephone calls for service
- *Dispatching Park Ranger vehicles and foot/bike Park Rangers
- *Handling the Park Ranger switchboard
- *Forwarding personal calls/messages to Park Rangers
- *Unlocking front door and monitoring of back door
- *Detailed computer case search and entry

All activities operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

B. Issues Identified

A detailed study of the Park Ranger communication function revealed that the dispatching system was deficient in training, equipment, operational procedures, and security. There is unnecessary duplication of effort, a lack of ability to track Park Rangers in the field, and no updated communication programs or equipment.

The following outlines specific concerns identified:

- There are four civilian dispatchers; one who initially was not certified, and one who was not current on his certification. If the dispatchers are classified as an Emergency Services Telecommunicator, then they must receive the basic 40-hour telecommunicator course. There was no indication of certification or of a formal training program in this course.
- None of the civilian dispatchers currently qualify as San Antonio Police Dispatchers.
- On-duty Park Rangers are brought in from assigned patrol activities to provide dispatcher relief. These Park Rangers deplete patrol availability in the field.
- There is no Police Call Automated Delivery System (PCAD)
- Equipment is old and out-dated. The dot matrix printer is so loud that dispatchers have requested headsets so they can hear the radio over the printer noise.
- There was no emergency alert system provided for Park Rangers in the field. If a Park Ranger activates his radio emergency button, there was no method available for the Park Ranger dispatcher to even know what has occurred or who is in trouble. This was corrected.
- Radio “dead spots” are located in several parks throughout the city.
- There is a serious lack of security in the dispatch area. Controlled access is non-existent.

- The radio equipment presently used is marginal. The dispatcher is restricted to a hand held radio and a base station unit. There is no SIMS unit located at the dispatch office.
- None of the present dispatchers are TCIC/NCIC certified, nor have they had re-certification classes as required for TCIC/NCIC access.
- There are no call expediters available resulting in Park Rangers being dispatched to all calls regardless of need. Expediters are employees whose primary responsibility is to take police reports over the telephone.

Consideration:

The dispatching function of the Park Rangers should be transferred to the San Antonio Police Department. Internally, within the SAPD Communications Unit, except as noted below, a decision would be made as to what channel or channels they would be assigned. All Park Ranger activity should be handled on the PCAD system, regardless of where they are assigned, with all marked units equipped with either laptop or Mobile Digital Terminals. Park Rangers working the Entertainment District would be assigned to a new channel dedicated to the 2100 SAPD Patrol Section, Foot Patrol, and Park Rangers.

Park Ranger Advantages:

- Improved control and accountability through use of the PCAD system.
- Certified dispatch personnel
- Direct interaction with SAPD field activity
- Enhanced safety and back-up
- Increased interoperability
- Reduction in duplicate call service
- Improved safety and management
- Availability of call expeditor services
- No depletion of patrol availability
- Accurate capturing of Park Ranger activity data.

Impact on SAPD:

- Relief of congestion of the Central Channel
- Reduction in duplicate call service
- Increased interoperability
- Improved SAPD officer safety

Consideration:

The San Antonio Police Department is in the process of changing from a mobile digital terminal (MDT) dispatching system to a lap top computer format. It is anticipated that this change will be complete by the end of 2002.

The Park Ranger Division currently has six laptop units. To allow for the placement of one laptop computer in every patrol vehicle (taking into consideration the need to upgrade the fleet to 28 patrol vehicles), 22 additional lap top computers would be necessary, as well as upgrade of the existing laptops to add global positioning capability. The cost for this initiative would be \$126,018, plus \$26,334 annually in recurring fees.

Consideration:

Currently, all radios are assigned to Park Rangers at roll call. This time-consuming function results in Park Rangers getting into the field as much as 45 minutes to one hour after roll call. To alleviate this delay, each Park Ranger should be permanently assigned a hand-held radio. Sufficient chargers should be made available to accommodate the recharging of batteries. Rules and regulations for use, accountability, security, negligent abuse or loss, and means for determining reimbursement cost for loss or damage would be developed. Permanent assignment is not meant to imply that the radios would become take-home equipment.

There are currently 124 portable radios on order for the Park Ranger Division. To supply every Park Ranger with a portable radio and to have adequate spares, 16 additional radios would be needed at a cost of \$32,000. To purchase 132 desk chargers for the additional radios would cost an additional \$11,385. Additionally it is recommended that a minimum of ten enhanced vehicle chargers be purchased to bring the total fleet of vehicle chargers to 32 at a cost of \$4,875. This becomes imperative if additional vehicles are purchased to supplement proposed staffing changes. The total cost of sixteen portables, ten enhanced vehicle chargers, and 132 desk chargers would be approximately \$48,260.

Consideration:

The physical movement of the dispatching function to the SAPD would require the four communication dispatcher positions within the Park Ranger Division to be abolished. The individuals currently holding these positions cannot be assimilated into vacant police dispatching positions. The qualifications differ, as do the pay scales. Park Ranger dispatcher salaries are less than emergency call-taker salaries within the SAPD. SAPD dispatcher's pay scales are higher than call-taker salaries.

Upon study by the Human Resources Department, the four dispatcher positions within the Park Ranger Division would be reclassified to positions similar to police service agents of the San Antonio Police Department. These positions, assigned to all three shifts, would relieve Park Rangers from non-law enforcement related tasks such as transporting

vehicles for repair to the shops, mail pick up and delivery, telephone duty, record-keeping, working as the quarter-master, bicycle maintenance, and other assorted clerical type tasks.

Consideration:

As discussed in Chapter 4, *Park Ranger Workload, Facilities and Equipment*, the use of call expeditors reduces the number of calls that need to be responded to in the field. Of the top fifteen calls for service received by the Park Rangers during the year 2000, over 200 of those kinds of calls alone could have been handled over the phone.

The San Antonio Police Department during the year 2000 expedited 50,551 calls or 6% of the 814,478 total calls for service. The availability of more expeditors would increase that number significantly. If the 6% estimate correlates with the Park Ranger numbers, 221 calls for Park Ranger service could have been expedited.

In the Police Department's *2001 Staffing for the Future* report to City Council, staff equates the number of calls made by an officer per year to the number of calls expedited to determine cost savings in manpower. If dispatch communications becomes a part of the SAPD, call expeditors will be available. If the dispatch communications stays with the Park Ranger Division, call expediting should become a part of the communications function.

Consideration:

In order for the SAPD to open up a new dispatcher channel to handle the downtown area (SAPD 2100 Section) which would include the Entertainment District, five new dispatcher positions would be needed within the SAPD. As outlined in Chapter 17, "*Staffing/Budgetary Considerations*", funds of approximately \$17,900 would be transferred from the FY 2002 Park Ranger Division budget to the FY 2002 SAPD Communications unit budget toward the cost of one SAPD dispatcher. The cost of the other four would be picked up through the SAPD budget. SAPD would use one existing position and should request additional funding in FY 2003.

Section 2. Park Crime Analysis

One of the most difficult aspects of doing analysis for this report was the inability to obtain good data on:

- Types of crimes occurring in city parks
- Number of crimes occurring in city parks
- Months, days, and hours, crimes when most often occur
- Concentration of crimes by location or neighborhood
- Why crimes are occurring

In the past decade, computerized mapping through the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) has become a valuable tool for law enforcement. The San Antonio Police Department uses GIS to identify patterns and crime concentrations as an aid in problem solving and the more efficient allocation of police resources. The case for mapping crime and criminal behavior is well founded in both research and practical applications. By and large, neither crime nor offending behavior is uniformly distributed across an environment. Rather, crime tends to cluster, forming “hot spots” in certain geographic areas. Mapping crime can reveal relationships that suggest the underlying cause of crime problems, supporting more effective crime control and prevention measures. At the most basic level, understanding where crimes cluster has helped the San Antonio Police Department allocate patrols to areas most in need of police officer presence. This is the very core of the Outer Parks District program outlined earlier. Teams of Park Rangers working in conjunction with communities and other city agencies, target those parks and city owned spaces where crime has been identified and is known to be occurring. This cannot occur, however, without the sharing of information, technology, and support.

Consideration:

One of earliest identified problems was an inability to extract valid crime data from City parks. The information that can be obtained is only as good as the information provided. Consolidation of the dispatching function and clear identification of park locations, reporting areas and addresses are basic to the success of any GIS related program. Currently some parks are known by several addresses and in some cases several names. For example, Olmos Park is listed on the City’s park inventory, however Franklin and Rusty Lions are not. Both of these parks are considered part of the Olmos Park complex, however, they have different addresses and are reported differently on Parks Project, Current Park Inventory lists. When one attempts to extract data specific to Olmos Park itself, it may or may not include information concerning Franklin and Rusty Lions.

Computer programs and accompanying identifiers must be developed specifically for information related to City parks. The resources necessary for this type of information gathering and dissemination are beyond that of the Park Ranger Division. Furthermore, it makes little sense for the Park Rangers to go to this expense when the personnel, expertise and technology already exists within the San Antonio Police Department.

In cooperation with the SAPD, necessary data entry, retrieval, analysis, mapping and information exchange programs and technology should be developed to assure the effectiveness of deployment of Park Ranger personnel to identified hot spots within City parks.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Accountability System

Section 1. First-line Supervisors

The vital role of first-line supervisors in the Park Ranger Division or in any organization cannot be overemphasized. They are the first line of defense against adverse employee behavior that can compromise effective and efficient operations, or worse, place the employee or others at risk. A process has been in place to notify Parks and Recreation Department management of incidents or arrests involving Park Rangers as they occur. This process has worked well through timely response to information provided by the SAPD, other agencies, and citizens.

Section 2. Monthly Activity Reports

Park Rangers had not been responsible for completing reports which document an individual's total monthly activity, i.e. reports written, tickets, arrests, warrants cleared, contacts made, number of calls, etc. This made it difficult to account for a Park Ranger's productivity or to make comparisons between Park Rangers' productivity levels.

Consideration:

Park Ranger policy now requires each Park Ranger to document his or her productivity on a monthly activity form and provides for that information to be entered into a database designed specifically for that purpose.

Section 3. Subpoena and Court Attendance Accountability

A review of the processes used to record and deliver subpoenas and track subsequent court attendance found them to be inadequate to assure timely notification and follow-up. Park Rangers' court dates were sometimes scheduled on relief days, or court times were not within a Park Ranger's normal working hours. Occasions when Park Rangers missed court appearances were not addressed. Additionally, Park Ranger Rules and Regulations did not require them to report their home telephone numbers and addresses. According to Municipal Court records, sixteen Park Rangers were absent from court during the month of September, 2001.

Consideration:

Subpoenas should be delivered daily to the supervisor of the shift to which a Park Ranger is assigned, and each Park Ranger should sign for subpoenas daily. Court dates and times will correlate with Park Rangers' working hours and days. Subpoenas will be entered into a signature book indicating all relevant court information. Residence addresses and

telephone numbers will be kept current. Disciplinary action will be initiated against Park Rangers failing to appear in court.

Section 4. Disciplinary Actions

Perhaps the most critical issue facing all branches of law enforcement today is the potential loss of public trust in law enforcement organizations. While the Park Ranger Division has no central database regarding Park Ranger misconduct, it is the general consensus that the number of misconduct cases has significantly increased in the past ten years. During fiscal year 1999 – 2000, sixty-five disciplinary action cases ranging from written counseling to termination were filed against Park Rangers.

There may be several reasons for this, including inattention to applicant background investigations, or the lack of adequate supervision. Every organization has a set of values—written or unwritten—which form the underlying structure of all policy, guidelines, rules and regulations. Experience suggests that when the rules and regulations of any organization are enforced, the number of people committing serious infractions is significantly reduced, since most cases of misconduct begin with minor infractions followed by increasingly serious violations.

Consideration:

The ratio of sergeant supervisors to Park Rangers has been discussed at length in several chapters of this report. The bottom line is that the current supervisor to Park Ranger ratio is unacceptable. A review of Park Ranger organizations across the country showed a more acceptable ratio of 1:9. The proposed changes suggested in Chapter 9, *Optimal Supervision Structure*, would allow the Park Rangers to achieve that ratio.

Consideration:

A review of the San Antonio Park Rangers “*Request for Organizational Change Input*” survey reveals a strong concern for the fairness of the disciplinary process. It is apparent that some members feel the process has been biased to those close to the Park Ranger administration. There is a perception, whether supported or not, that widely varying disciplinary actions have been administered for the same violation depending on whether one was a “friend of the chief”. One Park Ranger response from the organizational input survey stated, “No one single topic has caused more discord among the rank and file than this subjective manipulation of disciplinary rules.” “....This area has been abused to the point that a climate of mistrust and lack of respect is clearly evident.”

The Parks and Recreation Department has an Employee Council which reviews accidents, disciplinary issues and budgetary concerns, and monitors employee well-being. Each major division within the department has an Employee Council, including the Park Rangers. The continued use of this established process is recommended.

Consideration:

The Park Ranger Division does not have sufficient resources to support an internal affairs unit or enough personnel to rotate supervisors through such an assignment. However, every chief needs someone to handle internal investigations with competence, sensitivity, and objectivity. It is recommended that this become one of the responsibilities of the newly created captain position.

Section 5. Drug Testing

The use of illegal drugs by employees nationwide appears to be a growing problem in the workplace. It has been estimated that an average of 10 to 23 percent of all employees use drugs at work. These employees have three to four times as many accidents as do other employees.

Consideration:

It is recommended that the Human Resources Department explore options to expand the drug testing program to include the Park Rangers.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Naming of the Park Rangers

Section 1. Benchmarking Survey Results

As part of the performance review, the Performance Analysis Team developed a benchmarking survey which was sent to 55 city, county, state and federal agencies. The survey's purpose was to reveal how other agencies are handling key issues. While the survey did not ask questions concerning options for naming the Park Rangers, useful information was gained from each of the 26 agencies that responded to the survey.

Of the respondents, 21 (81 percent) use the job title Park Ranger, four (15 percent) use park police, and one (4 percent) uses another job title. All park police are armed; of the Park Rangers, 8 are armed units and 13 are unarmed. When asked about the primary duties of their personnel, those using Park Ranger indicated a greater focus on resource protection and interpretive/guide duties, in addition to law enforcement, versus the organizations using park police. The table below shows the number in each group that said their personnel performed the duties listed:

	Park Rangers	Park Police
Resource Protection	17	3
Interpretive/guide	15	2
Law enforcement	14	4
Other	2	0

The San Antonio Park Rangers have specific duties apart from law enforcement:

- Monitoring of park conditions and initiating work orders to correct deficiencies
- Strong customer service
- Gate opening/closings
- Monitoring of flood control

The following are considerations in favor of San Antonio continuing to use the Park Ranger title:

- Greater opportunity to continue non-law enforcement duties not traditionally performed by police
- Continued emphasis on public cooperation, an approach better suited to a recreation environment than the traditional role of police

These are considerations in favor of changing to park police:

- Employees' perception of greater respect from the public and, therefore, a perception of greater officer safety
- Focuses employees' attention and training on the higher risk aspect of their role, i.e., law enforcement
- Encourages cooperation with SAPD, facilitating coordinated emergency response and enhancing mutual safety of all officers

Section 2. Park Rangers as Park Police

State law generally prohibits the City of San Antonio from entering into any collective bargaining agreements with City employees. (Government Code 617.002) The rights granted to police officers to collectively bargain with the City are an exception to this rule based on "The Fire and Police Employee Relations Act," codified in Chapter 174 of the Local Government Code. This Act allows police officers and firefighters the right to collectively bargain if the City that employs them enacts enabling legislation. The City of San Antonio enacted enabling legislation in 1974. The question then becomes whether in changing the name of this division of the Parks and Recreation Department from "Park Rangers" to "Park Police," these individuals will fit within the definition of a police officer of Chapter 174.

"Police Officer" is defined by Chapter 174 of the Local Government Code as follows:

"Police Officer" means a paid employee who is sworn, certified, and full-time, and who regularly serves in a professional law enforcement capacity in the ***police department*** of a political subdivision. Local Government Code 174.003(3) (emphasis added).

As the definition makes clear, an employee is a "police officer" *for purpose of the statute* only if they are assigned to and are a part of the police department. The "Airport Police" have long had the word "police" as a part of their name; however, they do not fall within the definition as outlined in the Local Government Code, as they are not assigned to nor are they a part of the police department.

Consideration:

In 1991, the Park Ranger Association sued the City of San Antonio asserting the right to collectively bargain under the provisions of Chapter 174. The court of appeals made it clear in that case that the Park Rangers could not assert collective bargaining rights because they were NOT members of the police department.

In addition, the City Attorney advised in July, 2001, that a name change to Park Police, by itself, will not be sufficient to grant collective bargaining rights. The City Attorney cautioned, however, that further blurring of the roles of the Park Rangers and the San

Antonio Police Department might make distinction between them more difficult. Therefore, we can conclude that what matters most in determining collective bargaining rights has more to do with how the Park Rangers are managed and operated, and less to do with what they are called.

Given this background, and since it is not a recommendation of this report to incorporate the Park Rangers into the San Antonio Police Department, there is no reason based on collective bargaining rights not to change the name of the Park Rangers to Park Police. Park Rangers should be dissuaded from assuming that risks they have encountered in the past will become less risky with a name change. Nonetheless, if they believe the police title communicates their role to the public in a way that improves their safety, and collective bargaining is not a central issue, then the high-risk aspect of their work as peace officers leads us to recommend a name change to Park Police.

The review team believes the name change makes sense for several reasons. With implementation of the recommendations in this report, the Park Rangers will benefit from a more in-depth training program that will increase professionalism throughout the workforce. This will be reinforced by a more focused promotion process and on-the-job training for newly promoted employees. The General Manual, Rules and Regulations, and Standard Operating Procedures will provide the framework for improved operations. There will also be greater accountability, with a strengthened chain of command, lower supervisory ratios, and clear delineation of responsibilities at all levels. The recommendations also provide better equipment that will give the workforce increased capabilities. The cultural change that will result from these significant improvements will help assure that the new Park Police can satisfy the expectations of citizens and visitors.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

San Antonio Park Ranger

Request for Organizational Change Input Survey

Beginning October 1, 2001, all San Antonio Park Rangers were provided an opportunity to fill out a “Request of Organizational Change Input” survey. The Park Rangers were asked to complete the confidential questionnaire no later than October 15, 2001 and place it in a locked box in the roll call room. Only one key to the box was retained. The survey provided the Park Ranger members the opportunity to voice their opinions and obtain their input into the change process. The questions were designed to challenge the individual surveyed to participate in the process. Questions such as, “If you were appointed Chief of the Park Ranger Division what changes by order or importance if any, would you make within the first three months in office?” and “If you could design an organizational chart for the Park Division that included existing and/or new supervisory and/or command positions, what would be included and what would be the areas of responsibility” were designed to elicit suggestions, ideas, and innovation. Final tabulation indicated a total of 63 out of 124 surveys distributed were turned in for a 54% return rate.

Park Rangers provide a wide variety of replies to the twenty survey questions. Areas addressed and answers reflected attitudes about the following areas:

- What Park Rangers do (or should do).
- Where they do it (or should do it), and when.
- What they do it with (equipment, supervision, support, etc.)

With few notable exceptions, most of the replies reflected personal or individual issues, and there was little consensus within the group. The notable exceptions are discussed below.

1. Better Equipment

Throughout the replies to the 20 questions, a common theme was “better equipment”, including better vehicles, better radios, better MDT’s and/or laptop computers. Of those ranking “ideal changes” (“If you were appointed Chief of the Park Ranger service...”) 26% listed “better equipment” as a necessary change.

- When asked what specific types of equipment or resources would better enable Park Rangers to do their job, 23% identified “vehicles”, particularly full-size, police package patrol cars.

- Park Rangers also identified the need for “better MDT’s and/or laptops (18%), and better radios (15%). Radios needed to be the “take home” variety.
- The only other equipment need that was identified by more than 10% of the replies was “radar” (13%)

No other single item was identified by more than 20% of the Park Rangers responding. (Total response was only 54% of the total number of Park Rangers, so 20% would be only 30, not a majority or consensus).

2. Administrative and Organizational Issues

Items that were identified by more than 10% in the “If you were Chief...” replies included primarily administrative or organizational issues:

- Increased Pay/Benefits (16%)
- Change name to Park Police (12%)
- Establish SOP/General Manual (11%)
- Promotion Tests/More Supervisors (10%)

The “increased pay and benefits”, “change of name”, and increased structure through “SOP/General manual”, were not closely followed by replies to additional questions that agreed on what duties and responsibilities (increased or otherwise) the Park Ranger respondents thought they should have. Nor was there any idea expressed on the part of the respondents as to what the “organization” (organizational chart) of the agency should be.

3. What Park Rangers Should Do

Several questions addressed the issue of Park Ranger duties and responsibilities. No consensus of answers or opinions was expressed. Uncertainty among the respondents was evident:

- 36 Park Rangers believed they should be handling ALL calls, which appears (from additional comments and replies) to mean:
 - They should be dispatched interchangeably with SAPD, not only within the parks but also between the parks and as cover for SAPD
 - They felt they should also make traffic stops both within the parks and outside the parks, and
- There were several suggestions related to forming their own traffic unit.
- 24 Park Rangers believed there should be more personnel added to the “target teams” for public decency cases in parks. Supporting comments included:
 - doing full-time undercover work,

- expanding these activities outside the parks, and
 - forming their own vice unit.
- c. 32 Park Rangers thought they should NOT be responsible for park security such as:
- opening and closing park gates and bathrooms, and
 - individual Park Rangers indicated they should not be responsible for duties related to flood control;
 - safety hazards,
 - maintenance,
 - noise control,
 - zoo assignments, etc.
- d. Several also wanted to eliminate assignments to:
- LaVillita (3)
 - Hemisfair (2)
 - City Hall (2)
 - Market Square (2)
 - Alamo Plaza (2)
- e. However, they also wanted to:
- eliminate all “unnecessary paper work”,
 - stop “mandatory reports on traffic stops”,
 - eliminate vehicle run sheets,
 - eliminate having to call in locations for breaks, etc.

Answers to question (#17) “Do you know what management priorities are for a San Antonio Park Ranger?” were as follows: 13 gave no answer, 2 only said “yes”, and the remaining 45 gave 45 different answers.

4. Where Park Rangers Should Work and When:

While there was no real consensus among Park Rangers on what they believe they should be doing. There was some degree of agreement on where they should be doing it. There was also strong opinion on where they felt they should NOT be working.

Summary of results:

The River Walk emerged as the first priority for Park Ranger coverage. Responses from 23 Park Rangers identified the River Walk as first in order of importance for coverage, and only one listed the River Walk as not needing Park Ranger attention.

After the River Walk, only Brackenridge Park and Hemisfair Plaza emerged as having general acknowledgement of needing Park Ranger attention, although there were a

number of dissenters who felt that the present coverage in both Hemisfair and Brackenridge was unnecessary or too much.

More than a few Park Rangers indicated they did not believe certain prominent downtown areas needed the present level of Park Ranger coverage, including Alamo Plaza, Market Square, La Villita, and Travis Park.

5. When they should work:

Again no strong consensus, although a significant number (over 10% in each case) believed the present 24-hour-a-day Park Ranger coverage unnecessary in parks where Park Rangers are stationed there 24/7 (Alamo Plaza, La Villita, Travis Park, Market Square, etc.). More than 10 believed 24 hour-a-day coverage WAS necessary on the River Walk, in Brackenridge Park, and in Hemisfair Park.

When asked about working hours, 43% of 61 responses said present 8 hr/shift hours was OK, 18% had no response, and 11% (7 responses) suggested a 10 hr/shift day. Four Park Rangers (27%) indicated they wanted “more weekends off”.

Conclusion:

Other than the River Walk, and perhaps Hemisfair and Brackenridge, it was difficult to see any consensus on where the Park Rangers responding to the survey felt their manpower should be deployed (if given the choice of parks as places for deployment, which is part of the problem: they appear not to want to be confined to the parks). They did not feel they should spend too much time in certain locations, such as Alamo Plaza, La Villita, Market Square, particularly 24-hours-a-day. Responders generally felt the present hours were OK, but wanted more weekends off.

6. What Equipment and Support do Park Rangers Need:

Equipment:

There are two issues here prior to any discussion of equipment:

1. What should Park Rangers be doing?
2. Once #1 is decided, do they have the proper equipment to do it?

Requests for equipment, as discussed above, were the overwhelming priority of nearly all survey respondents, 40 Park Rangers (23% of respondents) wanted full-size patrol cars.

Thirty-two (18%) Park Rangers wanted MDT/laptops; 26 wanted better radios, 24 wanted radar guns, etc. However, most of the requests were predicated on a somewhat expanded vision of just what Park Rangers should be doing to need the additional equipment. The need for full police-package patrol cars is based on the belief that Park Rangers should

perform all functions of SAPD patrol officers, such as pursuit and traffic control. New MDT/laptops and radios are based on expanded responsibilities and duties. The same is implied for radar equipment, paddy wagon, etc.

The same issue exists for “support”, such as supervision and training:

1. What should the day-to-day function of Park Rangers be?
2. Do they have adequate training, supervision and support staff to perform those functions?

Requests for additional training (tactics, weapons, etc.) and support (such as evidence technicians) are based on the Park Rangers’ desires to expand their duties and responsibilities. Training categories of gangs, narcotics, riot, crowd control, as well as radar, accident investigation and crime scene investigation were mentioned.

Supervision was mentioned frequently as a topic in responses to nearly all questions. The Park Rangers appear to be concerned with the present supervisory arrangement, but differ widely on how it should be structured.

Conclusion:

Park Rangers will need appropriate equipment, supervisory structure and support (staff, training, etc.) according to their defined duties and responsibilities. Their present opinions as to what these should be are as varied as their ideas on what their duties and responsibilities are. Better equipment seemed to be a common theme even though increased pay/benefits was the top administrative issue. Where Park Rangers work and what type of equipment they have will be based on the mission of the Parks and Recreation Department and the role of Park Rangers.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Staffing/Budgetary Considerations

This chapter presents the staffing that would result from implementation of the various recommendations contained in this report. Associated budgetary considerations resulting from staffing and other recommendations are estimated and included where known.

Section 1. Park Ranger Staffing for Fiscal Year 2002 and Beyond

Looking to the future of the Park Ranger Division is not easy. What this review has shown is that conceptual and operational changes in the performance of the Park Ranger function must occur. A clear understanding of the role of the Park Ranger, their duties, responsibilities, and performance expectations must be agreed upon and made a part of the culture of the unit. It is clear that law enforcement is evolving toward a philosophical change that integrates diverse organizations and the community in problem solving strategies. Realizing this, it would seem natural that we follow that approach in our redesign efforts. Additionally, a new spirit of responsiveness and accountability must be the foundation upon which the new approach is taken. The challenge comes in formulating a strategy that merges problems with solutions and takes into consideration that decisions made today will continue to have an impact years from now.

This staffing plan is designed to meet that challenge.

Charts of the current Park Ranger organization, the recommended organizational structure and a comparison of current and proposed shift hours and strength are provided at Attachment 4.

The details of the reorganization are discussed in Chapter 8, *Efficient Patrol Deployment/Operational Changes* and other chapters as noted below. The results of the operational changes are as follows.

A. Regrade of Park Ranger Positions

In his March, 2001, request for a performance review, the director of the Parks and Recreation Department specified competitive compensation of employees as an issue to be reviewed. The Human Resources Department was asked to provide the results of a compensation market survey they had completed of all peace officer job classifications covering Park Rangers, Airport Police, and Code Compliance Abatement officers. Survey results showed that salaries of these City employees were below salaries of their counterparts in most comparison cities, as well as the salaries of police officers employed by several local school districts. In the FY 2002 budget process, a decision was made to fund a salary regrade for employees in Park Ranger, Airport Police, and Code Compliance Abatement officer job classifications, phased in over six months. The first

phase, a three percent adjustment, took effect on October 1, 2001; the second phase, also three percent, will take effect on April 1, 2002. Due to the level of salaries of the incumbent employees, each phase generated an average adjustment of five percent, totaling an average ten percent adjustment for both phases.

In addition, the review team recommends regrading the Park Ranger chief's position based on increased qualifications, particularly a broad law enforcement background; increased leadership, e.g., established relationships within city government and law enforcement organizations; and increased accountability, specifically awareness of signs indicating neighborhood and park disorder and willingness to act as a catalyst for change. The Human Resources Department examined the current pay range of the chief's position versus comparable police chiefs' salaries and the pay ranges of other Parks and Recreation Department division-level managers. The result was a recommendation to regrade the Park Ranger chief's salary from Range 66 (\$42,444 - \$63,672) to Range 69 (\$48,660-\$72,996).

B. In-lieu and Reclassified Positions

As discussed in Chapter 9, *Optimal Supervision Structure*, Section 2, a new position of Park Ranger captain would be created in lieu of an existing Park Ranger position. This position would serve to free the Park Ranger chief from day-to-day operations and allow him to deal with organizational coordination, needs, and planning. The captain's salary should be set at Range 67 (\$44,136 - \$66,204).

As discussed in Chapter 9, *Optimal Supervision Structure*, seven existing corporal positions are proposed for reclassification to sergeant positions, which reduces the supervisory span of control from 1:23 or more to a range from 1:6 to 1:13, depending on shift and assignment, and an average ratio of 1:9. This action permits the training position to be staffed with a sergeant.

In accordance with this plan, if all corporal positions were reclassified as sergeants, the cost for six months remaining in FY 2002 would be \$11,905.

In accordance with considerations found in Chapter 13, Section 1, *Park Ranger Dispatcher Communications*, the four current dispatcher positions would be reclassified into a job classification similar to that of a police service agent. One would be assigned to each shift to assist with telephone and office support for a total of three positions, and the other position would be transferred to the Richter Street location to work with the training staff. These newly created positions would require job classification in accordance with their duties and responsibilities. The change in salary, if any, resulting from this action needs to be determined.

C. Transferred Positions

One sergeant position is transferred to lead the training unit. The existing Park Ranger position assigned to training remains, and an additional Park Ranger position is

transferred from patrol to a new position as Park Ranger Division Fiscal Management and Applicant Processing/Recruiting/Research and Planning. There is no salary cost associated with this transfer.

One sergeant and six Park Ranger positions are transferred from patrol as Community Operations/Resource Education officers. There is no salary cost associated with this transfer.

Section 2. Cost Implications

The following represents the cost implications of all the review recommendations:

Recurring Costs:

	FY 2002	FY 2003
1. Regrade of Park Ranger positions		
October 1, 2001 (3%).....	\$168,759	\$168,759
April 1, 2002 (3%).....	\$101,749	\$203,497
Regrade Total	<u>\$270,508</u>	<u>\$372,256</u>
2. Personnel Services	5 Months	12 Months
Park Ranger Chief Regrade.....	\$ 3,095	\$ 7,429
In-lieu Park Ranger to Captain.....	\$ 8,818	\$ 21,162
	6 Months	12 Months
Reclassify Corporals to Sergeant.....	\$ 11,905	\$ 23,811
Reclassify Dispatchers.....	\$ 0	\$ 0
Transferred Funds for SAPD Dispatcher.....	\$ 17,900	\$ 35,800
		9 Months
Additional Dispatchers for SAPD.....	\$ 0	\$ 80,550
Personnel Services Total.....	<u>\$ 41,718</u>	<u>\$168,752</u>
3. Operating Expenses		
Upgrade Vehicles to Crown Victorias (21)....	\$ 6,300	\$ 25,200
New Vehicles (6).....	\$ 12,668	\$ 50,674

Laptop Computers (28).....	\$ 11,088	\$ 26,334
Portable Radios (16).....	\$ 1,558	\$ 7,427
Other Expenses.....	\$ 591	\$ 908
Operating Expenses Total.....	\$ 32,205	\$110,543
Recurring Costs Total.....	\$344,431	\$651,550

One-time Costs FY 2002

4. Vehicles and Associated Equipment

Upgrade Vehicles to Crown Victorias.....	\$218,144
New Vehicles.....	\$142,284
Vehicle Striping.....	\$ 9,250
Vehicles Total.....	\$369,678

5. Laptops for Vehicles

Laptop Computers (22).....	\$121,968
Upgrade Existing Laptops (6).....	\$ 4,050
Laptops for Vehicles Total.....	\$126,018

6. Radios and Associated Equipment

Portable Radios.....	\$ 32,000
Desk Chargers.....	\$ 11,385
Enhanced Vehicle Chargers.....	\$ 4,875
Radios and Associated Equipment Total.....	\$ 48,260

7. Name Change Expenses

Employee Patches and Badges.....	\$ 21,226
Vehicle Decals.....	\$ 727
Signage.....	\$ 1,100
Name Change Expenses Total.....	\$ 23,053

8. General Expenses

Video and Audio for Special Operations.....	\$ 5,500
Office Computers and Printers.....	\$ 3,165

Purchase Orders Initiated during Review

Headquarters Bldg. Improvements.....	\$ 11,104
Office Furniture for Headquarters.....	\$ 1,684
Alarm and Security Services.....	\$ 635
Richter Bldg. Improvements.....	\$ 7,150
Camera System for Richter Bldg.....	\$ 2,990
Traffic Vests.....	\$ 4,943
Batons with Holders.....	\$ 8,215
Phone System Charges.....	\$ 1,035

Purchase Orders Total..... \$ 37,756

General Expenses Total..... \$ 46,421

One-time Costs Total..... \$613,430

	FY 2002	FY 2003
Grand Total.....	\$957,861	\$651,550

Detailed budget information is available at Attachment 5.

CONCLUSION

This review was initiated to identify ways to make the Park Ranger Division more effective and efficient, with attention to a wide array of issues such as patrol deployment, competitive compensation, equipment and training. The result has been a comprehensive series of recommendations which will:

- Prepare the Park Rangers to meet current and future mission needs
- Give the City of San Antonio a park security force that represents the City more effectively to citizens and visitors
- Create a more favorable climate for public access to City parks and recreation facilities
- Provide an additional source of well trained, equipped and disciplined peace officers to augment city, county and state authorities in the event of emergency
- Define a professional career path for those wishing to serve their community as members of the City's park security organization
- Create highly visible, positive role models in venues where many of the City's youth tend to gather, i.e., large urban parks, community centers and sports complexes

The review demonstrated that the Park Ranger Division has done a good job to date:

- Survey results show that most people feel safe in City parks
- While limited data is available, reported crime is relatively low in the parks
- Complaints about safety-related park maintenance are infrequent

These findings indicate that a firm foundation exists on which to build the park security organization of the future. To help focus the improvement process, this report has highlighted several initiatives leading to successful transition of the Park Rangers to the next level of capabilities:

- A problem solving approach to park security issues
- Extensive partnerships with neighborhoods, communities and business groups
- Emphasis on sound procedural guidance, employee involvement, and fairness in promotions and discipline
- Comprehensive park maintenance
- Intelligent park design and planning

As these are emphasized and integrated, the Park Rangers will establish their identity as caring and committed employees with the right training and technology to promote a friendly and safe environment where all park users are welcomed as the City's guests.

The result will be a park security workforce that is transformed in terms of both culture and content, clear on its mission and well prepared to accomplish it.

Not all recommendations in this report can be implemented quickly. Therefore, aggressive and well-planned implementation is the most crucial element of all—the capstone of this review. The Parks and Recreation Department should take the lead in assuring implementation of approved recommendations, with assistance from the San Antonio Police Department and Human Resources Department where specifically recommended in the report.

The review team sees this as an opportunity to improve one of the City's most vital public services, thereby enhancing the quality of life for citizens and visitors to the City of San Antonio. We believe that with the right leadership and management support, the Park Ranger Division can become a model of effective and efficient service delivery.